THE Nation

VOLUME 147 NEW YORK • SATURDAY • OCTOBER 22, 1938 NUMBER 17

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The Shape of Things

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THE SEEDS OF ANARCHY SOWN AT MUNICH have sprouted with terrifying speed. Already the Czechoslovakia which stood almost alone against the Nazi military machine from early May until late September is gone. In its stead stands the federal state of Czechoslovakia, helpless militarily and economically, governed by what, in effect, is a fascist regime aligned with the Rome-Berlin axis. The election of a President to succeed Benes will be conducted along accepted Nazi lines with but one candidate permitted to run. Groups such as the Free Masons and Communists which might resist the pro-fascist trend have been summarily dissolved. The 500,000 Sudeten Germans still remaining inside the boundaries of Czechoslovakia are to be organized along Nazi lines under the direct control of Hitler. Taking advantage of the disappearance of all regard for law and justice, Hungary has sought to press its claims for Ruthenia by mobilizing 200,000 troops along the Czech border. But Hitler has made it clear that Hungary's claims are to be settled neither by force nor by the preferences of the people affected but by considerations of Nazi foreign policy. Chamberlain and Daladier, the saviors of "peace" at Munich and joint guarantors of Czechoslovakia's new boundaries, have unaccountably disappeared from the scene. No longer is there even any pretense of covering up the triumph of reaction and chaos.

*

URGENT ACTION IS NECESSARY IF THE tragedy of Sudeten refugees is not to become still more ghastly. For tens of thousands of anti-Nazis and Jews from the "conquered" regions Czechoslovakia is now a trap whose jaws may spring closed at any moment. The Prague government may seem harsh, but it is in a desperate situation. On the one hand, the presence of a mass of penniless refugees adds to its staggering economic difficulties; on the other, it cannot resist Nazi demands, prompted by a thirst for victims, for the return of anti-Nazi Sudetens. The democracies cannot salve their consciences by blaming Prague. They have bought peace at the expense of these refugees, and the least they can

THE NATION, Published weekly at 20 Vesey Street, New York, N. Y. Entered as second-class matter December 13, 1897, at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879. Copyright, 1938, by The Nation, Inc.

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do is to help them to escape, even if it means revising their own immigration laws. The United States, too, is a beneficiary of the dubious peace and ought to do more than it is now doing. Since 1929 the total immigration quota has been 153,900 annually, but for years it has been nowhere near filled. In 1937 only 50,244 alien immigrants were admitted, including those coming from American countries, to which the quota does not apply. With emigration allowed for, the net inflow of aliens was a mere 23,508. Surely a nation of 130 millions could absorb two or three times this number without economic disaster. Would it not be possible to transfer part of the quotas of countries such as Britain, which uses only a fraction of its allowance, to Germany and Czechoslovakia and thus speed up the evacuation of refugees?

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WITHDRAWAL OF 10,000 ITALIANS FROM Spain has brought greater jeopardy to the legitimate government of that country than the presence of some 100,000 in the rebel fighting forces. For although the Italians were never effective fighters, their departure is clearly intended to be the occasion for a second Munich deal to bring Spain definitely within the orbit of the fascist powers. The exact terms of the sell-out are not yet known. But Mussolini has made no secret of the fact that he expects the powers to grant full belligerent rights to the rebels in exchange for his "sacrifice." Granting of belligerent rights to the insurgents is the one measure which the government would be unable to withstand. With the aid of Italian warships recently "sold" to the rebels, Franco would be in a position to starve the Loyalists into submission. The government is self-sufficient as far as munitions are concerned, not so with respect to food. The agricultural sections of the country are largely in rebel hands. Premier Negrin has ruled out any possibility of compromise as long as foreign troops remain on Spanish soil. But even the most indomitable courage cannot prevail against starvation. The United States and other countries which still believe in the right of a people to choose its own government must see to it that the Spanish people obtain food. Contributions may be sent direct to the warehouse of the North American Committee to Aid Spanish Democracy, 14 Wooster Street, New York.

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MOST IMPRESSIVE OF THE WITNESSES TO appear before the fact-finding board appointed by the President in the railway-wage dispute was Senator Wheeler. He spoke from the detailed knowledge acquired as chairman of the Senate subcommittee which has been investigating the railroads, and he itemized twenty-one sources of waste in the present management of the roads. The wage cut for which the railroads are asking would save them, roughly, two-thirds of a million dollars a day. Senator Wheeler declared that the carriers could save a million dollars a day by plugging the "leaks" he listed. Unfortunately, as Senator Wheeler himself well realizes, we are dealing here not merely with a mismanaged industry but with one that is a victim of operations beyond its own domain. The Pullman monopoly, the fixing of steel-rail prices, loans to stock-market syndicates, exorbitant financial charges, the milking of the roads by holding companies, speculation in railroad stocks—all cost the roads millions of dollars a year, but the causes of these abuses lie in the control of both the railroads and their major sources of supply by the same bankers. We hope in a later issue to make a closer examination of Senator Wheeler's careful report. In the meantime it is clear that there will be no solution of the railroads' problem until control of them has been wrested from that "small inner group" of investment bankers to which W. Jett Lauck pointed in his testimony before the board. The question is whether the railroads are to be run for the benefit of these bankers or for that of the workers, shippers, investors, and consumers.

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THE STEEL INDUSTRY NOW HAS A MORE competitive appearance than for a long time past. Less than a month ago the general price list was reaffirmed for the fourth quarter, except for some modest concessions on railroad materials. In the past week, however, efforts to obtain the new season's automobile business have led to further price cutting of rolled sheets, and reductions on other material are in prospect. Taking into account the earlier breach in the price structure, resulting aggregate savings are conservatively estimated at an average of $10 per car. When competition first raised its head in the spring, there was much talk of price cuts necessitating wage cuts. No active move in this direction was made, owing, it is said, to the refusal of "Big Steel" to take the lead. Today, although no rumors of wage changes have been heard, Philip Murray of the Steel Workers' Organizing Committee has expressed grave alarm at "the terror-stricken condition of the steel industry brought about by cutthroat competition" which is "leading the nation away from the objectives of recovery." Nevertheless, we doubt that a new attack on steel wages is contemplated, or that cheaper steel will hinder recovery. Lower automobile and tractor prices suggest the opposite. Moreover, business is showing increased signs of faith in the upward trend, and it would be poor strategy on the part of the steel industry to make itself responsible for a setback by provoking labor trouble. It seems more likely that efforts are being made to stimulate consumption and so hasten the return of output to the "break-even" stage, now within striking distance. It is also possible that steel executives are not averse at this moment, with the monopoly inquiry starting, to staging a show of old-fashioned competition.

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A NAZI MOB LAST WEEK STORMED THE palace of Cardinal Innitzer, Archbishop of Vienna, chanting "Death to the black dog! To Dachau with Innitzer!" The building was sacked, books and religious relics were tossed on to a bonfire, the Cardinal himself was slightly injured by flying glass, and a member of his staff was hurled headlong through a window. The authorities first blamed "Communists" for the attack on the Cardinal; then, somewhat confusedly, Joseph Bürckel, Nazi Commissioner for Austria, declared that the rioting was provoked by a demonstration in favor of the Cardinal by "Czechs and Jews." After the shock of the affair wore off, Nazi officials abandoned such silly pretense and made it plain that this was only the first skirmish in a war on the Catholic church in Austria. Because of the "church attacks" against Hitler and his party," Herr Bürckel announced, Catholic proposals for the release of Kurt Schuschnigg would be ignored, preparatory schools for the priesthood would be forbidden, amnesty for "religious politicians" would be postponed, and marriages, schools, and the public streets were to be understood to "belong exclusively to the state." Exhorting Nazis to leave the church, he thundered, "We shall not tolerate that agitators attempt to pray Christian Austria away from the German Reich." On Innitzer himself we waste no sympathy. He is the prelate who advised Catholics to vote *ja* on *Anschluss* with Nazi Germany in order to check the "Communist menace" and who so outdid himself in heiling Hitler that the Pope had to call him to book. For the Catholics of Austria we have every sympathy. We hope that before it is too late they—and Catholics everywhere—will force their church to repudiate its Innitzers who, like Chamberlain, believe that there is peace and safety in conciliating a paranoiac.

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THE REAL ISSUES INVOLVED IN THE REFUSAL to admit John Strachey to this country are being obscured. Whether or not he is technically a Communist seems to us irrelevant. The fundamental question is whether the slightest legal warrant exists for excluding a Communist or anyone else purely on the basis of his opinions. The law permits refusal of visas to persons who believe in or advocate the overthrow by force or violence of the government of the United States. But what evidence is there, other than popular prejudice, that Communists fit this category? Is the State Department prepared to make a definite ruling barring Communists *qua* Communists, and if so why should it not bar fascists *qua* fascists? By a curious coincidence, another member of the versatile Strachey family, Major James Strachey Barnes, has just arrived here ostensibly to tell us about the virtues of Mr. Chamberlain. Hitherto Major Barnes has been better known as a trumpeter for Mussolini and a writer and lecturer on the virtues of fascism. He has the unusual distinction of being an honorary member of the Italian National Fascist Party; he has received a high Italian decoration, no doubt for services rendered; and he is a former secretary of the International Center for Fascist Studies. We have no wish to stand between Major Barnes and the ladies' clubs, but if the State Department is so set on keeping America unsullied, we cannot see why sauce for Cousin John is not equally good sauce for Cousin Jim.

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THE CURRENT ATTEMPT TO LOWER POSTAL rates on books deserves to succeed. Perhaps the most vivid way of presenting a situation that should be corrected is to point out that at present, while a two-pound magazine can be shipped by mail from New York to Los Angeles for 3 cents, the mailing cost of a book weighing two pounds is 26 cents. The charge varies according to the zone, but in general, books suffer by comparison with all other printed matter. Since 1913 they have been lumped with "miscellaneous merchandise." Before that they were classified with other printed matter and transmitted through the mails at a flat rate of 1 cent for every two ounces. Newspaper publishers have been more powerful than book publishers in influencing postal rates, yet the easy distribution of books is at least as desirable socially as the spread of other printed matter, most of our press and periodicals being what they are. High postage has increased the price of books, and has thus made them less available since New York is the capital of publishing, while the groups most in need of better and cheaper distribution of books live in rural sections. The President now has under consideration a proposal that book rates be lowered. A letter, or a wire, to the White House would help.

"Class Justice"

> Time and again men have gone before it [the Supreme Court] without friends or money, without influence or power, with nothing in God's world save the Constitution over their heads, and appealed for their liberty, and I challenge any living man to show a single instance in which the court denied it.—SENATOR BORAH, in a radio address attacking the President's court plan, March 20, 1936.

ON the day that the Supreme Court declined to hear the appeal of Tom Mooney it granted review in the Ford NLRB case. The question of what constitutes due process of law was basic to both decisions. But "due process" was applied so differently to these two petitioners that one is compelled to conclude that our highest tribunal does in effect administer one law for the rich, another for the poor.

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This favoritism has deeper roots than the personal predilections of the present membership of the court. We find it hard to believe that Justices Brandeis and Stone and (judging from the Mooney decision he wrote in 1935) Chief Justice Hughes would not be as glad as Justices Black and Reed to give Mooney the new trial for which he has been pleading for almost twenty-two years. Nor do we believe that grant of a review in the Ford case necessarily foreshadows a victory for Ford. Nevertheless, such is the momentum of habit and institutional bent, that the court grants Ford a hearing while denying one to Mooney. The injustice is sharpened by the disparity of the grievances. Mooney is still waiting for a chance to present before a jury the evidence that led Judge Franklin A. Griffin, three months after sentencing Mooney to be hanged, to appeal for a reversal of the sentence he had himself imposed. The Supreme Court of California rejected that plea on the barbarous doctrine that "a judgment," even a judgment depriving a man of his life, "cannot be set aside because it is predicated upon perjured testimony." Is this due process of law? The United States Supreme Court, thrice appealed to, has never seen fit to answer. But in the Ford case the court is willing to discuss a conception of due process that seems as far-fetched as Mooney's seems elementary. What Ford is really trying to do is to establish a vested interest in a legal error. His appeal from the Circuit Court asks not justice—for the Labor Board wants to grant Ford a new hearing in order to correct an error involved in its previous proceeding—but preservation intact of the supposed injustice as basis for reversal and further delay.

In the protection of property rights the Supreme Court has revealed creative ingenuity as well as indifference to states' rights and administrative efficiency. But when individuals, particularly if their views were radical, have been deprived of their rights in state criminal courts, the reaction of the Supreme Court has been a sudden concern for "our federal system" and "comity between state and nation." Principles so unequally applied are properly suspect. It is true that the present court has moved, though but timidly, toward a more liberal interpretation of due process. In 1918 neither Holmes nor Brandeis could see grounds for ordering a new trial in the Mooney case. In 1935 the court was provoked to take a sounder position by California's bland contention that even conviction on testimony known to be perjured by the prosecution did not constitute a denial of due process. But the court was not provoked far enough. It handed Mooney back to the mercies of the same state courts that had so long denied him justice, and it declined to review the result, although no one can read the California Supreme Court's subsequent decision without feeling the impact of animus, prejudice, and political passion.

The United States Supreme Court has too much discretion in appeals of this kind. Almost all cases now come before it on certiorari, a writ of review which the court may grant or not as it pleases. It is true that Chief Justice Hughes, in his letter to Senator Wheeler last year opposing the President's court plan, declared that the court always granted certiorari if four justices thought it called for, and often when only three or two did. In this case Justices Black and Reed took the unusual step of publicly registering their dissent. Yet the court did not grant a hearing.

We call on Congress to take three steps in the Mooney case. One is to ask the Supreme Court why a hearing was refused. The second is to bring Mooney before a Congressional investigating committee. The third is to revise the Judiciary Act in such a way as to force a review in cases of this kind. That this will increase the work of the federal courts is an argument of convenience. It has been no obstacle to the interminable reviews given propertied interests under the due-process clause in appeals from state regulation. The shadow of the Mooney case lengthens, and not to act is to acquiesce with shameful passivity in Mooney's own verdict: "Class justice."

Arming for What?

THE President's plan to expand our already large armament program is not likely to encounter successful opposition. In the light of Munich armed preparedness looks more and more like a dismal necessity —the lesser of two gross evils. Britain and France, taking stock after their shattering defeat, are laying great stress on the deficiencies of their armed forces. Nor can this be regarded solely as a face-saving excuse. There is plenty of evidence that had war come they would have been at a serious disadvantage at least as regards air power.

Giving full weight to military factors, we must, however, emphasize the point made by Robert Dell in his article this week, namely, that the real source of British and French weakness lay in their moral unpreparedness and their lack of a firm, definite foreign policy. If the clear approach of Nazi aggression had been met by an organized front of all the nations threatened, the fact that Britain and France, by themselves, were inferior in armed strength would not have been so important.

No security is to be won simply by multiplying armaments. An intelligent arms policy must be related to an intelligent foreign policy. In considering the President's program we must ask against what dangers we are arming and what measures, other than military, we can take to prevent those dangers from developing. If, for instance, we regard the growing strength of Germany and Italy as a possible menace, it is important to inquire whether there is sense in a Spanish policy which plays directly into their hands.

The President in making his statement to the press on

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the arms situation studiously avoided any reference to the political aspects of the question. Bernard Baruch, who has been among his chief advisers on the subject, was less reticent. Engaging in a little kite-flying—which drew a significantly heavy fire from the Nazi sharp-shooters—he laid stress on the danger of fascist penetration of Latin America. That is undoubtedly a factor which our foreign and military policies ought to take into account. We cannot neglect the possibility that the techniques developed in Spain may some day be practiced on our southern neighbors, in which event an augmented Atlantic fleet might prove necessary. But at present the fascist danger in this hemisphere arises from the use, not of military weapons, but of the tools of intrigue. Against these our best defense is to broaden the good-neighbor policy and eschew those "heavy uncle" methods which have encouraged Nazi trade relations with Mexico.

The thwarting of European or Asiatic interference in Latin America and the defense of our own shores from invasion must naturally form our primary objectives. But in pursuit of these ends we must also ask ourselves whether we can be completely indifferent to the fate of Europe. Should we feel more or less secure were the British Empire to collapse and be succeeded by a German empire of even more imposing proportions? Should we find, perhaps, that by keeping ourselves to ourselves, by refusing to cooperate with those whose cause is fundamentally the same as ours, in the end we were left to fight alone? That is the question Winston Churchill put to this country in his radio speech last Sunday. We cannot answer it adequately by referring to tradition. We have now to consider our future, not as a continent aloof physically and mentally from a Europe kept in uneasy balance by a number of more or less equal imperialisms, but as a possible democratic island in a worldwide ocean of fascism.

Wildcat Pensions

THE Townsend Plan is not so much dead as dissipated. The original movement has broken up into a multitude of state and local plans, each promising a golden millennium to the millions of Americans who are facing an old age of poverty and dependence.

Of all the current schemes California's "Ham and Eggs at Fifty" plan, described elsewhere in this issue, has aroused the greatest excitement. The scheme departs from orthodox Townsendism at four important points: (1) its provision for $30 a week is somewhat more modest than Townsend's demand for $200 a month; (2) it would start payments at fifty instead of sixty, thus greatly increasing the number of possible recipients; (3) it is statewide rather than national; and (4) instead of being financed by a "transactions tax" it utilizes the familiar Gesell stamped-money panacea which was widely discussed a few years back.

California has more old persons in proportion to its population than any other state in the union outside New England. Although its present average monthly pension of $32.34 for dependents over sixty-five is higher than that granted by any other state, it is not enough to give a decent standard of living to the state's aged. To make matters worse, less than a third of those over sixty-five and only about one-fifth of those over sixty receive a pension.

In view of this situation West Coast liberals are deeply troubled. They hesitate to line up with the reactionary forces which have been mobilized to defeat the "Ham and Eggs" bill. Yet they cannot fail to recognize that the proposal, in its present form, is fantastic and that if enacted it would lead to disaster. Several calculations have been made of its probable cost. Perhaps the most reliable is that of the Social Security Board, which estimates that the plan would call for the issuance of $1,560,000,000 in warrants each year, an amount four times as large as the present combined revenues of the state and all its local units. This would be equal to about one-third of the total income of all the people in the state, and would mean that every employed person in California would have to pay about $625 a year to support the idle over fifty. Proponents of the plan argue that the added buying power would increase production and thus make it possible to support the plan without extra burden on anyone. But the reverse is obviously true. It would be impossible to withdraw all or most of the persons over fifty from paid labor without a serious decline in production. Most fantastic of all is the proposal to finance the plan by self-liquidating warrants. In small doses the stamped-money plan has worked in isolated localities. But the one attempt which has been made to put it into force over a wide area—that of Premier Aberhart in Alberta—failed utterly. Backed by an intensive propaganda campaign, the warrants might circulate for a few weeks at par. But shrewd merchants would soon tire of paying a two-cent tax every Saturday and demand payment in legal currency. The result would be that the warrants would soon suffer a substantial discount and end by being virtually valueless.

Progressives might support such a plan if they believed that in so doing they were furthering the causes of adequate old-age pensions. But nothing is so likely to discredit the entire old-age pension movement as financial collapse in the states where liberal pensions are adopted. The only constructive approach to the problem is through federal legislation. Reasonably adequate provision for all America's aged could be achieved if the energies which are now being dissipated in wildcat schemes could in some way be harnessed to responsible efforts to liberalize the present Social Security Act.

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Inside Out

BY JOHN GUNTHER

EVEN to the dumb, the halt, and the blind the immutability of the law of cause and effect is sometimes made manifest. I refer of course to the Japanese invasion of South China as a direct consequence of the Munich "peace-in-our-time" agreement. It is now clear that in effect Chamberlain and Daladier sold out not only the Czechoslovakians but the Chinese.

For at least a year the Japanese, to my certain knowledge, were tempted to an invasion of the Hongkong region; they refrained out of fear of British annoyance and retaliation. Separation of Hongkong from its hinterland suffocates British trade in this highly profitable quarter. It also greatly diminishes the strategic value of Hongkong as an imperial base. So for a long time the Japanese did not dare send an expeditionary force to South China. Came Munich: the Japanese knew they had no more to fear. Give an aggressor an inch these days and he takes twenty miles. Thus the Japanese are now fighting in the Hongkong area.

The invasion is a desperately serious matter for China. In a recent *Nation* article I sought to explain the extreme and crucial importance of routes of supply to the Chinese Army. The Hongkong-Canton-Hankow route was by far the most important of these routes. It is now apparently cut. The Chinese may be heroes, but it isn't pleasant to fight the armored Japanese with bare fists.

THE ARAB extremists in Palestine, as unmitigatedly worthless a gang of ruffians as I have ever come across, are fighting their holy war with renewed savagery and some considerable success. Here the line of cause and effect to Munich cannot be quite so sharply drawn, but everyone knows that Hitler invited a hundred spoon-fed Arabs to Nürnberg and that he several times compared them to the "heroic" Sudeten riffraff. The Arabs continually call Hitler their hero. But in general the ebb and flow of Arab terrorism has been closely associated not with Germany but with Anglo-Italian relations. When Mussolini is feeling sweet and being nice to Britain—naming his price the while—the Arabs are usually quiet in their holes. When Mussolini waves the big stick in Britain's face, the Arabs rise. No one has ever found a check signed by Il Duce in the Grand Mufti's pants, but everywhere in Palestine I found agreement that Italian influence and probably Italian money had their methods of getting around the unhappy little lump of country. This incidentally produces a peculiarly painful paradox for Dr. Weizmann and the Zionist leaders. They know that the best hope of peace in Palestine is a settlement in Europe; only then can Britain pay full attention to Near Eastern affairs. But for Dr. Weizmann to approve a settlement like that of Munich means applauding his worst enemies, Hitler and the newly anti-Semitic Duce. Jews in Palestine, in other words, unfortunately stand to gain security only by the success in Europe of those who persecute the Jews.

SPEAKING OF the Jews, it is interesting to recall that the Japanese recently took up anti-Semitism. There were scurrilous anti-Semitic exhibitions in Tokyo pointing to the Blum government in France and to Jews in the British Cabinet. Speeches against Jews were made in the Diet. This was obviously because Japan, an earnest pupil in the totalitarian school, understood the need of an enemy to whack at. The Chinese could not be the enemy because the official yarn is that Japan is "liberating" its "friends," the Chinese people. The anti-Jewish campaign was a failure, however, for the simple reason that no Jews could be found in Japan. Next the Japanese set about harassing the Free Masons, à la Mussolini. But there were hardly any Free Masons in Japan either, and the campaign fizzled out. Of course, if they gave speech to their inmost thoughts, the Japanese could name what they consider the real enemy easily enough, that is, the white race. This, if developed, produces a nice equation: We whites, whom Hitler calls Aryans, become the equivalent of Japanese Jews.

CHINA ASIDE, it seems to me that the most interesting subsidiary phenomena to the Munich pact are three. First, I am amazed that so little attention has been paid to Hitler's remarks at Saarbrücken that inclusion in the British Cabinet of Eden, Churchill, or Duff Cooper would be considered an unfriendly gesture. This in effect means that Hitler is suggesting that he has veto power over the composition of the British Cabinet.

Second, the German Minister of Economics, Dr. Funk, has lent 150,000,000 marks to Turkey. This comes atop a very considerable British loan to Turkey earlier in the year. The Germans are trying to outbid the British on the road to Bagdad. We shall see much more of this sort of thing. Not only Dr. Funk is on the march. General funk is marching, too.

The third is the *ballon d'essai* by Augur—a Russian whose real name is Vladimir Poliakov—probably deriving from Ribbentrop and suggesting an Anglo-German air pact limiting the British air fleet to 33 per cent of the German. Hitler has wanted an air pact in the West for a long time. The power that is strongest always takes the initiative in trying to make other powers accept permanent weakness. The theory that Munich would bring conciliation to Europe is exploded from the long-range point of view by the acceleration of arms programs everywhere. We have "peace in our time" to the rollicking tune of an armament race even more violent than heretofore.

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"Peace"—Abroad and at Home

BY PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, October 18

AS THE full import of Neville Chamberlain's treachery strikes home, Washington is breaking out with a nasty case of jitters. The first tendency was to discount the importance of the Munich betrayal to this country; the present tendency is to exaggerate it. Persons who felt at the time that, while it was too bad, still it was none of our affair, are now succumbing to nightmares in which Nazi hordes swarm northward from the South American jungles while Italian bombers drone over Manhattan and the Japanese fleet descends upon the Panama Canal. Before examining this state of alarm, let us look into the circumstances which have produced it.

Foremost among them is the mounting conviction that the British ruling class has definitely decided to salvage its own social and economic stake by entering a partnership with Hitler for the control of Europe, with Mussolini occupying the position of junior partner. Every indication supports the belief here that France will be sold out as ruthlessly as was Czechoslovakia, if not so completely. What will happen to Spain heaven only knows, except that it may be expected to go down fighting. On the French bourgeoisie who have gone about muttering, "Better Hitler than Blum," sympathy would be wasted, although one may grieve for the betrayed workers. In any case, that is the picture which has unnerved official and unofficial Washington.

Granting that it is not pretty, the question remains whether it justifies the United States in plunging headlong into an enormous armament program such as has been indicated since Bernie Baruch stumbled into the White House last week with every hair standing on end. Suppose Hitler does complete his conquest of the Danube basin, and Mussolini gets Tunisia and Spanish Morocco. Suppose the Japanese do take Hankow and consolidate their position in central China. Does that mean that "it will be our turn next"? Not necessarily, or even probably. The pillars of the Colosseum will be dust before an Italian soldier crosses the Atlantic. In a word, we are in little if any more danger than we were before the ascendancy of the dictators in Europe.

Since I am neither Miss Dorothy Thompson nor the Lord God Almighty, I do not pretend to know all the answers to all the questions, but I have consulted experts and they tell me that an invasion of this country by a hostile force is almost inconceivable under any circumstances that now can be imagined. The only force which could attack us with any hope of success is the British navy. While the Tories will play ball with Hitler in Europe, the only expeditionary force which they plan to send over here will consist of George and Elizabeth. There isn't a bombing plane in Europe capable of carrying enough gasoline to fly the Atlantic round trip, to say nothing of explosives. Even if our present Atlantic fleet were sunk with all hands, there are not enough carriers in existence to bring to our shores a fleet of planes sufficient to engage our air-defense forces. As for establishing a hostile air base in Latin America, those things are not done under cover of darkness, and we have a number of excellent bombers of our own.

Baruch's analysis of the military situation interests me considerably less than his suggestion that a sales tax might be imposed to meet the cost of additional armament. His knowledge of military strategy may be slightly less than Napoleonic, but he is thoroughly familiar with the tax question from the point of view of great wealth, and this is not the first time he has put his influence behind that darling of the rich—the sales tax. Together with John J. Raskob and other financial angels of the Democratic Party, he almost got one through Congress several years ago, and probably would have succeeded but for the terrific resistance mustered by Representative Fiorello LaGuardia. I seem to detect an odor, and it is not the odor of gunpowder. The situation is calculated to tempt Roosevelt, because he has always been a big-navy man, and because a lot of political capital can be made out of a war scare. I doubt that he will fall for it completely, but for once it is a comfort to know that Congress will soon be in session.

And while we are being realistic about war on the foreign side, we may as well be realistic about peace on the domestic front. The impression seems to be widespread that a truce between the C. I. O. and the A. F. of L. is imminent. I do not share it. On the contrary, I am persuaded that the end of labor's civil war was never more remote. Just consider the facts. At its preceding convention the A. F. of L. set up a three-man committee to "negotiate" with the C. I. O. When the parleys were actually held, it soon developed that while the committee might "negotiate" till the cows came home, it lacked authority to settle anything. Between the Willard Hotel, where the negotiations took place, and the Hamilton Hotel, where the A. F. of L. Executive Council sat in a smoke-filled room, George Harrison trotted back and forth until his tongue was

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hanging out, but nothing came of it. His principals were determined that nothing should come of it. Very well. The recent convention did not prolong the committee's life, nor did it authorize the Executive Council to conclude a peace which would override any of the jurisdictional claims over which the international unions are in conflict with the C. I. O. Only a convention can authorize such a settlement, and the next convention is a year off.

The truth is that the position of the A. F. of L. leaders has not changed in the slightest degree. That self-perpetuating hierarchy of labor lords never intended to take any action which would disturb its own sinecure. It will never take such action unless forced by pressure from below. It is true there is considerable dissatisfaction among the rank and file, but most of it exists among the recent recruits. The aristocrats of the building trades are content to sit tight while *hoi polloi* of the mass production shifts for itself—or permits John Lewis to shift for it. Dan Tobin and his teamsters are merely the exception.

Meanwhile, out where the job begins, C. I. O. men and A. F. of L. men have been able at many points to establish a form of peace which is entirely practical without being formal. On the West Coast Dave Beck and Harry Bridges are working in perfect harmony to defeat ballot proposals which would restrict picketing and make some strikes illegal. When Bill Green sent a letter to Pennsylvania indorsing the candidacy of the ineffable "Puddler Jim" Davis for reelection to the Senate, the State Federation promptly told him to go to hell, and joined the C. I. O. in support of George Earle. When peace comes it probably will be through such amalgamation at the bottom.

Fraud Rules in Europe

BY ROBERT DELL

Geneva, October 6

SOME of my friends thought that my article published in *The Nation* of August 20 was too pessimistic and that I was too hard on the British Prime Minister. Now that the predictions of that article have been fulfilled to the letter, they are inclined to attribute to me some special gift of prophecy. Yet I was not alone in my view of the significance and probable consequences of the Runciman mission, which was the only hypothesis that fitted all the known facts. Besides, if one puts the worst possible construction on any act of the British government, one is sure to be right in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. It is as simple as that.

The betrayal of Czechoslovakia by the British and French governments is now consummated. And the representatives in Parliament of the English and French peoples have approved the crime, thus becoming accessories after the fact. In the French Chamber 535 deputies approved the action of the government, and only the 73 Communists, 1 Socialist, and 1 deputy of the right voted against. The names of these two just men deserve to be recorded. They were Pierre Bloch and Henri de Kerillis.

This terrible moral collapse of France is the greatest disillusionment of my life. For nearly sixty years France has been my second country and my spiritual home. The French people have their faults like all other peoples, but they have always been courageous and have had a high sense of honor. I cannot believe that they have suddenly changed in the course of a couple of weeks. When they realize how they have been tricked and betrayed by cowardly or corrupt politicians and by a venal press, they will, I am confident, turn on the men who have betrayed and dishonored them, but, alas, it will almost certainly be too late.

Let us not deceive ourselves. The probability—the heart-rending probability—is that this is the end of France as a power in the world. The guilt of France is greater than that of England, for France was the ally of Czechoslovakia and England was not. Moreover, several times during the last six years Germany has made overtures to Czechoslovakia. On one occasion the German government proposed a pact of non-aggression on condition that Czechoslovakia denounce the treaty with France and the pact with Soviet Russia. Each time the Czechoslovakian government consulted the French government and was told to reject the German proposals and assured that France was firmly and irrevocably behind Czechoslovakia. Thus, out of loyalty to the French Alliance, the Czechoslovaks lost the opportunity of coming to an arrangement with Germany on conditions less unfavorable than those imposed on them by the British and French governments. Up to September 18 the French government continued to assure the Czechoslovak government of its support, but on that day Edouard Daladier and Georges Bonnet agreed to impose on Czechoslovakia the proposals of Hitler and Lord Runciman. At 2 a. m. on September 21, after the Czechoslovak government had refused to accept the German-British-French plan, President Benes was presented with an ultimatum by the British and French Ministers to Prague. He was told that if he rejected the proposals, France would not fulfil its obligations under the treaty of alliance and Czechoslo-

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vakia would therefore be left to fight Germany alone.

And this crime was committed by politicians of the left. Anatole France said that the reactionaries never needed to be in office in France because they could always find men of the left to carry out their policy. The events of the last three years have indeed justified him. No government of the right could have done what the Daladier Cabinet has done. It would have met with the opposition of all the parties of the left, including the Radical Party of which Daladier and Bonnet are distinguished ornaments. This conduct on the part of Daladier and Bonnet is not surprising. Daladier has been true to his past, for it was his policy in 1933 and, in particular, his secret negotiations with Hitler, in which Fernand de Brinon acted as intermediary, that drove Poland into the arms of Germany.

Not only the French Radicals, however, are responsible for the crime. Their responsibility is shared to the full by the French Socialist Party and its leader, Léon Blum. The moral collapse of Léon Blum is as great a disillusionment as the moral collapse of the French people. After having betrayed the Spanish Republic he has now helped to betray and destroy the only democratic state left in Central Europe. For Czechoslovakia has been destroyed. The new Czechoslovakia, deprived of its fortifications, with an undefendable frontier, with its whole economic system shattered, cannot lead an independent life, either politically or economically. It must become a vassal state of Germany and at any time Hitler can annex it, if he thinks it worth while, but perhaps he will not. As for the British and French guaranty of Czechoslovak independence, it is an insult added to injury. What honest man will dare to say that England or France will ever go to war to defend the territorial integrity of the remnant of Czechoslovakia? We all know that they will not, and so do the Czechoslovaks. The guaranty is a piece of arrant hypocrisy. Léon Blum has a special responsibility for the destruction of Czechoslovakia. He prepared the way for it when in 1936, under British pressure and to avoid annoying Mussolini, he refused the offer of a pact of mutual assistance made both to France and to Germany by the countries of the Little Entente.

The most sinister part in this shameful affair has been played by Georges Bonnet. For some time past, while he has been assuring the Czechoslovak government of French support, he has not concealed in private conversations his opinion that France should throw over Czechoslovakia to get an understanding with Germany. He even went so far as to tell the German Ambassador to Paris that he was in favor of a plebiscite in the Sudeten German districts. He has inspired the defeatist and anti-Czechoslovak articles in the French press, on which Goebbels descended like Jupiter in a shower of gold. Bonnet has been working with Flandin, who is the representative in France of the British pro-German group and who sent a telegram of congratulation to Hitler after the capitulation at Munich. Bonnet's utter cynicism is shown by some remarks that he made in private conversation with a certain delegation to the League Assembly during his flying visit to Geneva on September 11. He said that, if there was war, Italy would be on the side of Germany, Poland would at the best maintain a malevolent neutrality, and it would be necessary to send troops into Spain to destroy Franco and turn out the Germans and Italians. Thus France would have to fight on three fronts, which would be like "jumping off the Eiffel Tower." On the other hand, if Hitler were allowed to have his way in Czechoslovakia, he would soon become the master of Central Europe and ultimately France would sink to the level of a third-class power. Such, on Bonnet's own showing, will be the result of his policy. Bonnet's attitude convinced diplomatic circles in Paris and also, no doubt, Hitler that France would not fulfil its obligations to Czechoslovakia.

Although this time it was the French government that took the initiative in the final capitulation to Hitler—it was Daladier who proposed the visit to Berchtesgaden—there is no doubt that French diplomacy was outwitted by British diplomacy, as it has been consistently for the last three years. One of the few Frenchmen I have ever known who realized that the British ruling class is the most intelligent, unscrupulous, and perfidious ruling class in the world was Anatole France, whose perspicacity was almost superhuman and who was completely free from illusions. Even some of my most intelligent French friends refused to believe me when I told them that "close cooperation with England," practiced in the way in which it had been practiced since the beginning of 1936, would end in the ruin of France. I do not hesitate to say that Laval's policy of an understanding with Germany and Italy to exclude British influence from the Continent would have been less disastrous to France than the policy of the Front Populaire. It would have been better to treat with Germany on equal terms in 1935 than to capitulate ignominiously in 1938. This does not mean that, in my opinion, Laval's policy was the right one. France had not the choice between two evils. Had the policy of Louis Barthou been continued, France would now be stronger than ever.

In fact, the betrayal of Czechoslovakia is the result of a put-up job, just as the betrayal of Abyssinia was in 1935. Chamberlain's decision to dismember Czechoslovakia was not made at Berchtesgaden on September 16 but in the middle of June, when he first proposed to send a British mediator to Prague. And, as I said in *The Nation* of August 20, Runciman was sent to Prague to induce Czechoslovakia to commit national suicide, so that Hitler might get what he wanted without resorting to force. The Runciman mission was imposed on the French government, and when that government weakly consented to it, the initiative passed out of its hands. The

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following passage in Chamberlain's speech in the House of Commons on October 3 is significant:

> Ever since I assumed my present office my main purpose has been to work for the pacification of Europe, for the removal of those suspicions and those animosities which have so long poisoned the air. The path which leads to appeasement is long and bristles with obstacles. This question of Czechoslovakia is the latest and perhaps the most dangerous. Now that we have got past it I feel that it may be possible to make further progress along the road to sanity.

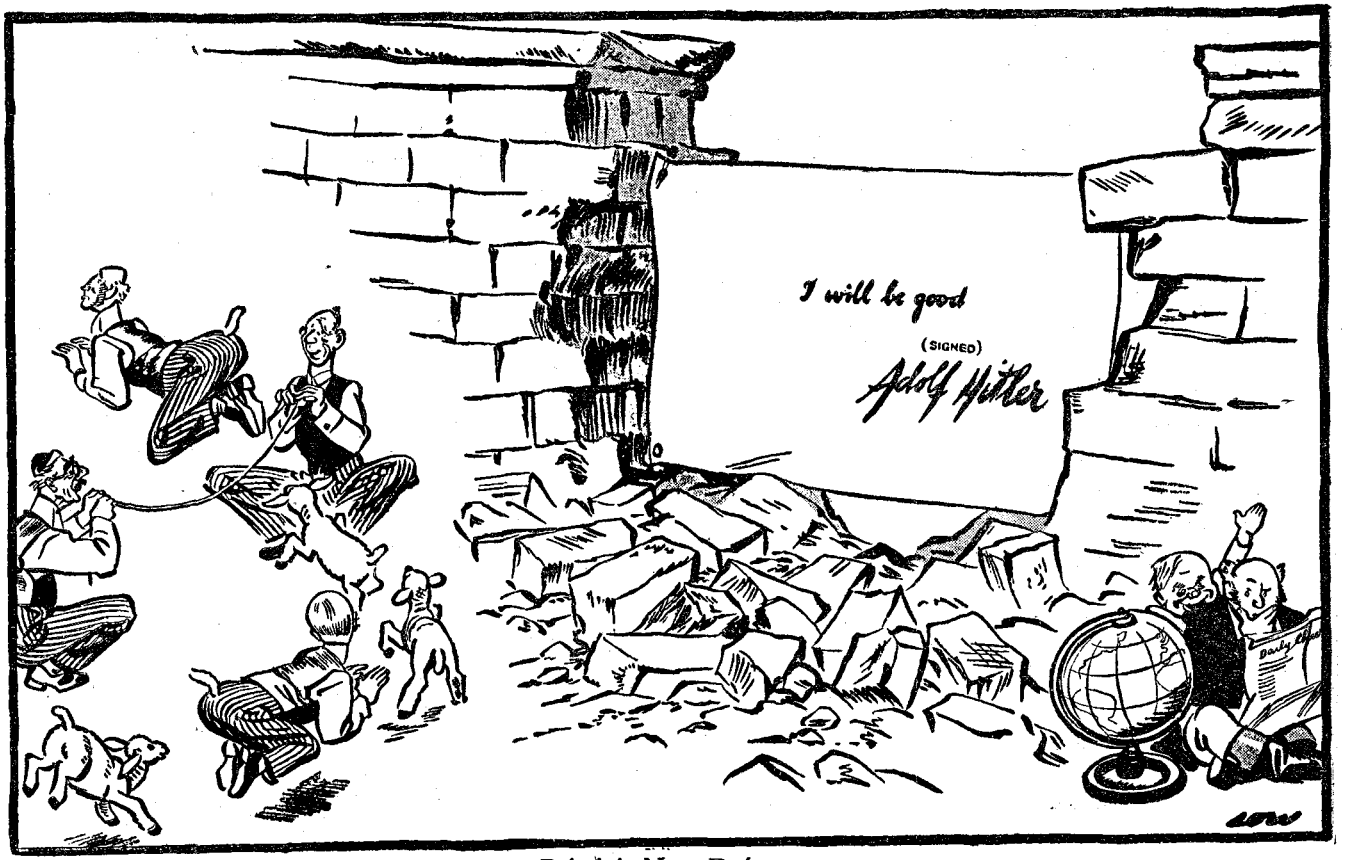
That is to say, Czechoslovakia was the last and "most dangerous" obstacle to Chamberlain's policy of an Anglo-German-Italian understanding and therefore had to be destroyed. The great difficulty in the way of its destruction was the French-Czechoslovak alliance, which, therefore, had to be got rid of. It was got rid of.

Runciman's report, dated September 21 but actually given to the British Cabinet immediately after Chamberlain's return from Berchtesgaden, shows that Runciman had decided to recommend the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia before Hitler formally demanded it. In some ways Runciman went even farther than Hitler. For example, he suggested that after the transfer of Czechoslovak territory to Germany "a representative of the Sudeten German people should have a permanent seat in the Czechoslovak Cabinet." He further recommended:

> . . . that those parties and persons in Czechoslovakia who have been deliberately encouraging a policy antagonistic to Czechoslovakia's neighbors [that is, the anti-Nazi parties] should be forbidden by the Czechoslovak government to continue their agitations and that, if necessary, legal measures should be taken to bring such agitations to an end.

Runciman admits in the report that he had "much sympathy with the Sudeten case," and that he believed that any arrangement other than the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia would not have been lasting. Runciman's views were, of course, known to the Sudeten German leaders and through them to Hitler, and it cannot be doubted that his presence in Czechoslovakia was an obstacle to any agreement between the Sudetens and the Czechoslovak government. Runciman's attitude also, no doubt, convinced Hitler that the British government would never take any action to prevent him from having his way in Czechoslovakia.

On the other hand, certain members of the Runciman mission undoubtedly did their best to obtain a settlement. When Henlein went to Berchtesgaden on September 2, the Sudeten Germans were disposed to accept the third plan of the Czechoslovak government as a basis of negotiation. On September 3 Basil Newton, British Minister to Prague, informed President Benes that he must accept Henlein's eight points. This became known almost immediately to Hitler, who thereupon ordered Henlein to reject the third plan. Chamberlain said in his speech in the House of Commons on September 28 that "Lord Runciman strongly supported Mr. Newton's representa-



Britain's New Defense

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tions to Dr. Benes." Benes gave way and proposed the "fourth plan," which was communicated to the Sudeten German representatives on September 6. Chamberlain said in his speech on September 28 that "in Lord Runciman's opinion this plan embodied almost all the requirements of the eight Carlsbad points." On September 12 Hitler made his violent speech at Nürnberg, and on September 14 Henlein issued a proclamation stating that the Carlsbad points were no longer enough and demanding the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia. He then fled to Germany, where he proceeded to form a Sudeten legion to attack Czechoslovakia. After the flight of Henlein and the other Sudeten extremists the more moderate Sudeten leaders, who remained in Czechoslovakia, showed a disposition to come to terms with the Czechoslovak government, and it is possible that an arrangement could have been arrived at had they been left to themselves.

Violent as it was, Hitler's Nürnberg speech showed that he did not want a general war. Diplomatic opinion in Europe was almost unanimous in thinking that if England, France, and Russia had together informed Hitler that a German attack on Czechoslovakia would mean war with all of them, he would never have dared to make such an attack. The British government persisted in refusing to make such a declaration because Chamberlain wished Czechoslovakia to be dismembered in the interest of his pro-Fascist policy. Above all, he wished to avoid cooperation with Soviet Russia. There was always a certain risk that Hitler might be mad enough to go to war with England, France, and Russia, especially when he had committed himself so far as he had in his Nürnberg speech. A successful war against Germany would have involved the support of Soviet Russia and of organized labor in England and France. The British and French ruling clases recognized what a danger that would be to them, and they dared not risk it. The chance that Hitler would really have forced a war, however, was very small. Certainly he could not have counted on the support of Italy, where the feeling was such that if he had gone to war in support of Germany the Fascist regime would have been overthrown. There is good reason to believe that the King of Italy refused to sign a mobilization order and said that he would abdicate rather than agree to war.

All the British assurances were worded in such a way as to leave a loophole for the British government to get out of intervening in defense of Czechoslovakia. The official statement made to the international press on September 11 said that Great Britain could not remain outside a general war "in which the integrity of France might be menaced." The question in what circumstances the integrity of France would be menaced was thus left to the appreciation of the British government. The statement issued by the British Foreign Office on September 26 said: "If in spite of all efforts made by the British Prime Minister a German attack is made upon Czechoslovakia the immediate result must be that France will be bound to come to her assistance, and Great Britain and Russia will certainly stand by France."

As in all previous British declarations on the subject the whole responsibility of resorting to war was thrown on the French government. Those who knew Daladier and Bonnet knew that they would never have the courage to take it. As Daladier said in his speech in the Chamber, it was he who suggested to Chamberlain by telephone on the night of September 13-14 that there should be "direct meetings between the responsible men." Apparently Daladier wished to go to Berchtesgaden himself with or without Chamberlain, but the latter insisted upon going alone and Daladier yielded as usual.

Why did the French government suddenly climb down in this way at the very moment when public opinion in England was stiffening? It was not for military reasons, for General Gamelin had reported that the French army was ready for war and that the chances were strongly in favor of a German defeat. In my opinion the reason was that Daladier and Bonnet had never intended to go to war in any circumstances. On September 17 Chamberlain returned to London from Berchtesgaden, and on the next day Daladier and Bonnet went to London and were informed of the Hitler-Runciman plan. When they returned to Paris, Daladier declared that they had yielded to British pressure, but this was not true. The truth was that both Halifax and Vansittart, especially the latter, raised great objections to the Hitler-Runciman plan, and if Daladier and Bonnet had supported them, Chamberlain would have been obliged to yield. Daladier and Bonnet supported Chamberlain against them.

In the course of the meeting in London on September 18 Bonnet gave a completely false account of the conversation that he had had with Litvinov at Geneva on September 11. He declared that Litvinov had told him that Russia could not intervene to defend Czechoslovakia in the event of war. In fact, Litvinov had told him exactly the contrary. Bonnet had already told the same lie to his colleagues in the French Cabinet. Further, Bonnet took with him to London General Gamelin's report, of which he read only the first few pages in which General Gamelin set forth the weaknesses of the French army. In the rest of the report Gamelin set forth the strong points of the French army and concluded in the sense already mentioned. When Bonnet returned to Paris, he circulated in certain French papers a report that the Russian government had been asked to start military conversations with the French and had refused. Again the truth was exactly the opposite. Before Litvinov left Moscow for Geneva he had proposed military conversations, and he repeated that proposal to Bonnet on September 11. He publicly declared in two speeches made in Geneva, one in the League Assembly and the

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other in the Sixth Committee of the Assembly, that Russia would fulfil all its obligations under its pact with Czechoslovakia. While Chamberlain was at Godesberg on September 22, Lord de la Warr had a conversation with Litvinov at Geneva on instructions from the Foreign Office, and Litvinov again asked for military conversations. As soon as Chamberlain returned to London from Godesberg, all contact with the Russians ceased. The French government refused to hold military conversations up to the last moment, even when it was ostensibly making preparations for war. This, to my mind, is a convincing proof that the French government did not intend to go to war in any circumstances.

Chamberlain's own account of what happened at Godesberg shows that he himself wished to accept the Godesberg ultimatum. When he was leaving Godesberg he said to the press, "It is now up to the Czechs." The indignation aroused by the ultimatum both in England and in France was, however, so great that it was impossible to accept it. Thereupon, Chamberlain and Daladier decided to frighten the British and French peoples into allowing capitulation to Hitler. The military preparations in both countries were nothing but an extremely expensive stage-set for the purpose of spreading panic and of enabling Chamberlain and Daladier to pose as the men who had saved Europe from war.

According to Daladier's statement in the French Chamber on October 4, it was again the French who were on the run first. On September 26 Chamberlain sent Sir Horace Wilson to Berlin with a letter to Hitler, whose reply, which Wilson brought back the next day, was uncompromising. During the night of September 27-28 Daladier and Bonnet telephoned to François-Poncet, the French Ambassador to Berlin, instructing him to see Hitler at once and to tell him that the French government would agree to an "extension" of the Anglo-French plan of September 19, which would allow Germany to occupy on October 1 the whole of the territory to be ceded by Czechoslovakia. Thus, on that date the French government capitulated completely to Hitler. At the same time Daladier and Bonnet telephoned to the French Ambassador in London instructing him to ask Lord Halifax to have the British Ambassador to Rome ask Mussolini to support the idea of a four-power conference.

On September 28 Chamberlain sent a personal message to Hitler informing him that he could "get all essentials without war and without delay" and proposing to go to Berlin to discuss arrangements for transfers with Hitler and representatives of the Czech government together with representatives of France and Italy, if Hitler so desired. "I feel convinced," Chamberlain said, "that we can reach an agreement in a week." In fact, they reached one in twenty-four hours, because the agreement was simply a capitulation to Hitler. At the same time Chamberlain also appealed to Mussolini, at whose request Hitler was alleged to have postponed the German mobilization for twenty-four hours. What this meant it is difficult to say, for Germany was already mobilized. Hitler refused to allow Czechoslovakia to be represented at the conference and Chamberlain gave way.

France is now in a terrible position. It has lost the last of its allies and has not a friend left in the world. The destruction of the Czechoslovak fortifications means that from thirty-five to forty German divisions will be set free in the event of war to attack France. It was for that reason that successive French governments prevented Czechoslovakia from coming to any agreement with Hitler. It is to be feared that the French will soon be obliged to realize that in joining in the murder of Czechoslovakia they themselves committed national suicide. In *The Nation* of July 24, 1937, I said that the aim of British policy was to compel France to abandon all its commitments east of the Rhine and to intern it in Western Europe. Perhaps I may be allowed to quote the following passage from that article:

> The calculation is that by the time Hitler has made himself master of the Continent east of the Rhine, England will be so strongly armed that it will be hopeless for Germany to attack it, and England will be in a position to make an alliance with Germany on its own terms. This is the real reason for England's rearmament. France would then be forced to come into the Anglo-German combination and would sink to the position of a second-class power under Anglo-German control. In my opinion this policy, which is not unlike a division of the world into British and German spheres of influence, is a serious menace to the United States of America.

Thanks to the folly and the weakness of the rulers of France, British policy has completely succeeded. At Munich Neville Chamberlain initiated the last stage. The joint declaration that he signed with Hitler without consulting the French government or even the British Cabinet was as great an act of disloyalty to France as the Anglo-German naval agreement, which it declared to be "symbolic of the desire of our two peoples never to go to war with one another again." Yet England is bound to go to the aid of France if that country is attacked by Germany. Are we to conclude that this treaty is to go the way of the treaty of alliance between France and Czechoslovakia?

Without any doubt Anglo-French friendship will be weakened by the Munich capitulation. People always despise those whom they have successfully swindled, and the contempt for Daladier and Bonnet in British official quarters is hardly disguised. Already people are saying in England: "We are not dishonored, because we had no treaty with Czechoslovakia, but France is dishonored." The whole blame for the capitulation will once more be thrown on France, this time, unfortunately, with rather more reason than on previous occasions.

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Living Philosophies

IV. WHAT I BELIEVE

BY JOHN STRACHEY

MY PHILOSOPHY of life is simple. I know what I want for myself. I want the opportunity to live a reasonably secure and full life, with the opportunity to contribute from whatever capacities I have to the common store and to receive, in return, the benefits of the capacities of others. In a word, I want Life, Liberty, and the Pursuit of Happiness; I am not aware that the thing has been better put since the time of your founding fathers.

I presume that other people want this too. I presume this because I do not believe that in these fundamental respects human beings differ very significantly, and secondly because I observe that, however confusedly, men's efforts are directed toward this end. I also note that up till now in human history by far the greater part of mankind has never succeeded in getting anywhere near the attainment of this end. I do not, of course, know what the world would be like if mankind as a whole succeeded in obtaining secure and reasonable conditions of life. Maybe nothing much would come of it. Maybe, as the poet of late nineteenth-century disillusionment has it:

> "The troubles of our proud and angry dust
> Are to eternity, and shall not fail."

Nobody can prove the contrary; and nobody but an ass believes that the attainment of satisfactory conditions of life would do more than make it possible for men to approach the most intricate and interesting problems of living. But for that very reason it may be, and I for one believe that it would be, that the attainment of such conditions of life would open up a new epoch of human history which would make our present concerns seem very small beer indeed.

What, pray, is there to do with one's life in this twentieth century of ours except to take part in the struggle to build a world of security and peace? The only practical alternative, for men and women of any vigor, is to try to get money and power for themselves. There is, to be sure, this old ideal of personal advancement, not indeed, from log cabin to White House—that is old stuff—but from slum tenement to bank parlor. There was a time, no doubt, when a reasonable man could feel not dissatisfied with such a career, for his own personal success in the struggle was, up to say 1914, genuinely bound up, to some extent at any rate, with the development of the community. A man could hardly make a great fortune or build up a financial empire without, if only incidentally, building great railroads or public utilities or what you will for his country. But today who can doubt that the road to great personal wealth and power lies, in the representative examples, not so much through building anything as through preventing things from being built; not so much through the provision of more and better supplies of food or clothing or what you will to the community as through the cornering or restricting of such supplies as there are; not through the development of the community but through a hold-up of the community.

Once that has become apparent, it seems to me that there must be something a bit queer about a man who can feel real satisfaction in devoting his life to the struggle for money and power. He must be either so frightened of poverty that he can think about little else or he must have a slightly pathological love of accumulation. Or again he must be so frightened of being powerless that he cannot feel safe unless he feels omnipotent—or something of that sort. There are no doubt lots of people with one or other of these kinks; present-day conditions of life tend to breed them. But for more normal people the old success-story ideal must surely be profoundly stale. And what else is there, I repeat? Do you wish to turn your back on the whole world in despair? It is two or three centuries too late for that. The command, "Get thee to a nunnery!" makes no real sense today.

By far the greatest and by far the worst thing that has happened in the world for the past two decades is the appearance of the armed and organized Nazi heresy. I call it heresy advisably, for the innermost core of Nazi doctrine is precisely a denial that men can identify their interests with those of humanity as a whole. The core of Nazi doctrine is the denial of humanity. And whether we like it or not, it is a historical fact that the concept of humanity appeared in a religious form; it appeared,

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above all, in the specific form of the Christian doctrine of the infinite worth of every human soul.

Moreover, and this is very much to the point in connection with the Nazi heresy, the Christian doctrine of the infinite worth of every single human being was the disguised expression of man's revolt against slavery, the basic institution on which the whole ancient world was founded. This doctrine was the dissolving agent—"the un-saying word"—which undermined the institution of slavery, and undermined with it the whole gigantic structure of the empires of antiquity.

Now it is, whether they realize it or not, the object of the Nazi leaders to drive the mass of mankind back to a new form of slavery, as a condition necessary to the continuance of the private ownership of fields, factories, and mines. It is the declared object of Nazi economic policy —and this is the first act of any fascist government—to withdraw from men their right to sell their power to labor, freely and as they will. The first and decisive step in this withdrawal is to make it a criminal offense for workers to strike. This is clearly the first step in the introduction of compulsory labor; in a word, it is the first, long step in the reintroduction of slavery. Is it not intensely interesting, significant, and ominous that the Nazi philosophers (and do not make any mistake about it—there *are* Nazi philosophers, and important and powerful ones) have found it necessary simultaneously to attack the Christian idea of humanity and the infinite worth of every individual human being? For this was the idea which dissolved the old slavery. This, therefore, is the idea which must be overthrown if the new slavery is to be established.

It will, I am convinced, in the end become clear to every sincere Christian that, in spite of their apparently greater regard, not indeed for religion itself, but for the churches as institutions with property rights, the specifically Nazi, and generally fascist, view of life is incomparably farther from, and more irreconcilable with, the Christian view than is the Marxist or Communist view of life. For the Marxist does, explicitly, accept the ideal of a united humanity as the ultimate object with which the individual must identify himself. The Christian clothes this belief in language and concepts which are so different from those of the Marxist that he may, and indeed almost always does, fail to see that at the bottom they stand for the same thing. Above all, the Christian is shocked by what he has been told of the Marxist doctrine of the class war. Now it is perfectly true that Marxists believe that the 90 to 95 per cent of the population of any community which does the work of that community has to take power out of the hands of that 5 to 10 per cent which lives by virtue of its ownership of the fields, factories, and land of the community before the ideal of a united humanity can be realized. It is perfectly true that the Marxist believes, as a result of experience, that this 90 to 95 per cent of the population will only be able to achieve power by political struggle.

Now this Marxist view may be right or wrong, good or bad; that is not the point. The point is that the whole object of the class struggle as conceived by the Marxist is to achieve a united humanity. It is precisely this ultimate ideal which the Nazis specifically reject. Every Nazi philosopher, like every Nazi politician or statesman, reiterates that there is no ideal beyond that of the nation or race. Their ultimate world view is one of endlessly warring races. It is precisely in order to make such a future possible that the Nazi philosophers, both by writing their own books and, more concretely, by burning the books of former philosophers, make war upon any idea which includes that of a united human race. It is thus gravely to underestimate the scope and sweep of the Nazi movement to suppose that it is directed simply against Communist, Marxist, or Socialist thought, or even that it limits itself to attacking humanitarianism and liberalism. On the contrary, it is indispensable for the Nazis to attempt to eradicate every tenet, including above all that basic element in Christianity, which tends, in however mystical a manner, toward the ideal of a united humanity. For so long as such ideas can reach men's minds the world cannot be made safe for slavery at home and war abroad.

Well, my philosophy is that this movement must be fought. Every year of the twentieth century which passes makes it more clear that humanity must move down this incomparably dark path if it does not succeed in the struggle to create a new world. For that very reason we now see that the enormous impetus, the overmastering drive, needed to create that new world is coming, not primarily from amiable "idealistic" people who want to make things better (they could never be anything like strong enough to do the job by themselves), but from millions of men who, though they may not see very clearly what they are doing or whither they are going, are determined at any rate not to go down the dark path. We realize that it is fear of, and horror at, the regression of the world to slavery and war which drives men to achieve a far higher basis of freedom and peace than they have ever yet known. It is precisely out of and by means of the gigantic defensive struggle against fascism and war, for which worldwide forces are today massing, that the struggle for a new world is being generated.

I am bound to say that the basic problem seems to me almost embarrassingly simple. The problem is so to arrange the life of society that its members can get their livings in peace and security. Until and unless they can do that, there is no chance of their living decent lives. Is that so hard to see? Does one need to subscribe to some special interpretation of history to agree with that conclusion? Is it, for example, so difficult to understand that the citi-

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zens of Germany cannot today live very decent lives when their community is so arranged that the final object of all their work is the piling up of instruments of slaughter; when they are told that war and its preparation are the be-all and end-all of human life; when everything—material prosperity, truth, reason, science, and religious belief—must be sacrificed to that end? Or again, is it so very difficult to see that that great part of the citizenry of the United States which now, every ten years or so, is suddenly deprived of the opportunity to work or earn, and passes into a period of months or years of semi-starvation without having the slightest possibility of controlling, much less averting, the catastrophe by anything which they can do—is it very difficult to see that, no matter what moral virtues are preached, people in such a situation will not be able to be very reliant, satisfactory, or hopeful citizens?

Nor, for my part, do I believe that there is any mystery as to why the people of Germany, for instance, are being maddened into the belief that war is the only object of human endeavor, or as to why the people of the United States periodically lose their livelihoods. The reason is that the means of production—the fields, the factories, and the mines, the capital of their respective countries—have passed out of the possession of the mass of the population and have become the exclusive possession of a small class or group. It is this extraordinary and unparalleled concentration of the ownership of the means of production in the hands of a small class of persons which is making it impossible for the American people, for example, to get their livings at all, and for the German people to get them at any other task than armament building.

This is, of course, no place to attempt to prove this statement (the larger part of my written work is devoted to no other purpose than this), but again, is it so difficult to see that this extreme concentration of property in the means of production at one end of the social scale will produce just those monstrous results which we see around us? I do not know of any exact figure on the concentration of capital ownership in the United States of America. But in Great Britain, according to the latest figure—that of Messrs. G. W. Daniels and H. Campion, in their standard work, "The Distribution of the National Capital"—80 per cent of the capital of Great Britain is now owned by 6 per cent of the population. The concentration would not, I think, be quite so extreme in the United States, for you still have a fairly large class of independent farmers owning their own land; but there is no doubt that the American situation is rapidly moving in that direction.

For example, the census of 1930 revealed that four out of five actively employed Americans were wage or salary earners. In a word, four out of five Americans today get their living by working for that small group of Americans who own the capital of the country. (But perhaps these four out of five wage-earning Americans themselves own the capital of the country, through diffused share-holding, and thus employ themselves, as it were; but no, according to that authoritative work, "America's Capacity to Consume," "with the masses of the population, the income derived from investments is negligible." Hence the masses of the American population certainly do not own the capital of the country, for if they did, they would draw incomes from it.)

Now the fact that the ownership of the capital of every one of the great capitalist communities has got into the hands of a small class of from 5 to 10 per cent of its inhabitants would not matter in itself. It only matters because the ownership of capital inevitably carries with it the receipt of all the really large incomes. The maldistribution of capital necessarily carries with it a maldistribution of income so extreme that the system simply will not work any longer. In the case of America we have figures to show just how far that maldistribution of income has gone. In 1929 (notice the year) the 36,000 richest American families each got an income of over $75,000 a year. These families, taken together, got ten billion dollars. But there were twelve million American families which had each an income of less than $1,500 a year. And these twelve million American families, taken together, also got almost exactly ten billion dollars a year. "Thus it appears," write the authors of "America's Capacity to Consume," "that 0.1 per cent of the families [at the top of the American social scale] receive practically as much as the 42 per cent of families at the bottom of the scale."

That is the kind of inequality in the distribution of income which the private ownership of the capital of the country by a small group of persons inevitably produces. When once income has become as maldistributed as that, the economic system must inevitably begin to break down. For that horrible, familiar situation arises in which it is impossible to sell the final products of industry and so keep the masses of the population in employment. The rich, the 0.1 per cent of families at the top of the social tree, will not buy this final product since they are already gorged with luxuries, while the 42 per cent of families at the bottom of the social scale, who taken together got no more than the 0.1 per cent, have no money to buy the final products, however bitterly they need them. And so nobody buys them; they are not sold, and the men and women who made them fall out of work and become poorer still.

There are all sorts of palliatives, many of them very useful, by which this situation can be dealt with. You can take some of the money, by one means or another, which flows into the hands of the 0.1 per cent of families and distribute it, by one means or another, to the 42 per cent of families. That is, I understand, what your Presi-

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dent, Mr. Roosevelt, is attempting to do at the moment; and it is well worth doing. But is it not clear that this can be no more than an attempt to deal with the consequences of a fundamentally unsound system? The only real cure is so to alter the system that the initial maldistribution of income does not occur. And you cannot do that so long as between 5 and 10 per cent of the population owns the means of production, the capital of the country. The only way to produce a distribution of income sufficient even to make it possible for the population to buy the total product of industry and so keep themselves in employment is, in the long run, to redistribute the means of production themselves, which are the source of income, to the mass of the population. But you cannot distribute big modern means of production such as railways and power stations by cutting them up and giving little bits of them to individuals. You have got to place them in the collective ownership of the whole population. It will not be until you have done that that you will have made it possible for people to live decent lives. But that is all you have got to do. And that is socialism.

"Ham and Eggs" in California

BY JOHN B. CANTERBURY

ON A recent Sunday afternoon nearly seven thousand people packed the mammoth Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles. Some of them had met before—first in the Mayan Theater downtown, seating 1,500 persons, then in the Philharmonic Auditorium, capacity 3,900 persons. Now they were at the Shrine, seating 6,700—the biggest auditorium in town. Next, they would have to move to the Olympic Stadium, the largest outdoor arena in the United States, accommodating 120,000. Such has been the development of the California Pension Plan—the most amazing and the fastest-growing movement of the people ever to hit California. Epic, Utopians, Doctor Townsend—all these pale into insignificance beside what has come to be known as the "Ham and Eggs" movement: "Thirty Dollars a Week for Life," or "Life Begins at Fifty."

Incredible as it may seem, the thirty-dollars-a-week plan has developed into a major issue in the coming fall elections, in which it will be voted on as an initiative referendum. Unknown a few months ago, it caught California's business and political leaders napping. The scheme as outlined by its leaders is as follows:

> California Pension Plan proposes an amendment to the constitution of the State of California to be known as the Retirement Life Payments Act—to pay $30 a week for life to every senior citizen of California who is fifty years of age or over who has retired or will retire from active business or employment for compensation. These Retirement Life Payments will be paid with state warrants, like the millions of dollars' worth of interest-bearing warrants already issued by the State of California and now outstanding, except that these warrants will be non-interest-bearing and self-liquidating, and will be in denominations of $1 each.
>
> These warrants will be redeemed or self-liquidated by the sale of two-cent state redemption stamps, which will be affixed to each warrant each week. At the end of fifty-two weeks the warrants will be paid by the state at full face value with United States money which has been received by the State of California from the sale of stamps. Thus the warrants are self-liquidated—paid—without increase in taxation. Our proposed constitutional amendment, the Retirement Life Payments Act, makes it possible for all of our senior citizens to enjoy an honorable and secure retirement; their increased purchasing power will stimulate business tremendously; new opportunities will be created for all the residents of California under fifty; and the whole tendency is forward to an orderly balance between production and distribution.

The fundamental idea of the thirty-dollars-a-week plan was first introduced to Southern California by Robert Noble, easily one of the foremost rabble-rousers in existence. Noble was formerly chief lieutenant for the late Huey Long on the Pacific Coast and has espoused various other popular causes. His plan as first launched was called "Twenty-five Dollars Every Monday." He talked to good crowds and soon built up a big following. Then one Lawrence Allen, a radio attorney who had acted as his legal adviser, managed to obtain Noble's radio time and launched the California Pension Plan. Rumors circulated concerning unsavory intrigues among rival pension factions, with Noble's followers declaring that Allen had stolen the plan from their popular leader. Allen and his brother established headquarters in Hollywood, raised the ante to "Thirty Dollars Every Thursday," and the snowball was started rolling. Soon some sixteen pension plans were bidding for public favor. California citizens tried to decide whether they would prefer to have twenty-five dollars every Monday morning, thirty dollars every Thursday, or thirty-five dollars every Friday. The Los Angeles *Times* hinted that "Los Angeles was a lunatic asylum every Sunday."

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Since its beginning last October the California Pension Plan has shown steady growth, mainly as a result of highly efficient exploitation. The Allen brothers owned a recording studio where radio transcriptions were made, and a dramatic radio program hammered away daily at the ears of receptive California listeners. Enthusiastic and well-attended mass meetings were held each Sunday afternoon in the downtown theater. In a few short months the movement spread to the northern part of the state and the great central valleys. In mid-July leaders of the plan filed their petition. It was signed by nearly one million persons, the largest number ever to sign an initiative petition for any measure in California. The figure indicates a statewide following rivaling or exceeding the mighty Sinclair Epic army of 1934.

More than three thousand active workers are engaged in spreading the gospel, more than a hundred speakers take nightly turns, three million pieces of literature have been placed in circulation, and two sound trucks roam the state holding daily meetings. Probably twenty-five meetings on an average are held every evening, attended by at least 25,000 people. The promoters are making particularly good use of the radio.

The financial organization of the "Thirty Dollars Every Thursday" drive is equally far-reaching. To advance the plan, more than 162,000 members contribute a penny a day, a total of $48,600 a month. An illustrated hundred-page booklet, "Ham and Eggs," sells for 25 cents. "Liberty Bell" lapel buttons also bring a quarter each. Copies of the act sell for 10 cents, and donations are continually solicited.

Inevitably strenuous opposition to the plan has been aroused. Not all the elements in the state share the philosophy of the "Ham and Eggers." The Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce has branded it "a dangerous monetary reform" and circularized its members with strongly worded warnings. The California State Chamber of Commerce has raised an emergency fund of $65,000 to oppose it. A large corporation of chain grocers has announced it would not accept the proposed warrants. This opposition reached a climax when several petitions were filed before the California Supreme Court on behalf of taxpayers seeking to keep the pension plan off the ballot. Asking a "writ of mandate," these suits contended that the titling of the measure was faulty and that it covered more than one point, thus confusing its purposes. At once 150 attorneys offered their legal counsel to the pension-plan leaders, including several high in the state's political and legal life.

In the California primary elections of August 30 the "Ham and Eggs" measure became the major issue. On the eve of the primary attacks came from two directions. Doctor Townsend, father of the pension movement, branded the California Pension Plan "unsound." President Roosevelt in a statement from Hyde Park reiterated his previous warning against "short cuts to Utopia or fantastic financial schemes" and declared that the "thirty-dollar" plan would "represent a tax on all the people and would fall particularly heavily on the poor." In record numbers Californians went to the polls. All candidates who had supported the pension plan won by substantial majorities. These included Sheridan Downey, who defeated Senator McAdoo in the contest for the United States Senate, and Culbert L. Olson, who won the Democratic nomination for governor. Congressman John F. Dockweiler, an outspoken advocate of the plan, polled a large vote as runner-up in the Democratic race for governor. Senator McAdoo frankly blamed his defeat on the "thirty-dollar" issue.

The California Pension Plan may be described as the use of credit based on unproduced wealth. The purpose of the plan is to "synchronize production and purchasing power." Underlying it one may detect the technocratic philosophy. "Technological disemployment," it is declared, has forever displaced a great proportion of our population. To meet this changed condition, the argument runs, some method of distributing more purchasing power must be devised.

The main objections to the plan are based on the question of where the money to pay the warrants is coming from and on doubt of its constitutionality. Although there are 1,667,000 persons over fifty in California, plan leaders expect only 500,000 to apply for the payments. They estimate that the plan will require $780,000,000 a year. The net wealth produced in California in a normal year is placed at approximately four billion. The sum of yearly transactions reaches a total of forty billion. Bank checks are said to constitute the circulating medium by which nine-tenths of this business is done. Business in California, it is asserted, will be about doubled by the use of the new credits if the warrants turn over once each week as expected. The pension plan will be paid for in the "increased production."

The Constitution of the United States provides that no state shall "coin money, emit bills of credit, make anything but gold and silver coin a tender in payment of debts." To get around this clause, spokesmen for the movement point out that the proposed warrants are not "bills of credit" but "credit instruments." And they refer to the Retirement Life Payments as an "internal economy" designed to function only within the state, explaining that the warrants will not replace the present currency but merely act as a "supplementary medium." The warrants are redeemed out of new wealth created—business not now being done—and do not depend for their value upon tax sources or existing wealth.

Suggesting that the President was "misinformed," the plan leaders have stated that the burden does not

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fall upon the poor, for the operation of the sales tax levy of 3 per cent is suspended where the warrants are used, and, admittedly, the sales tax is a poor man's tax. One tax authority has expressed the belief that no taxpayer, small or large, has anything to fear from the operation of the plan; on the contrary, the restoration of purchasing power will undoubtedly have the effect of replacing upon the tax rolls of all counties the property now permanently delinquent—property which has become delinquent because of the loss of income of the great middle class.

Opinion as to the feasibility of the plan is sharply divided. Irving Fisher of Yale, principal proponent of the warrant idea, and author of a book "Stamp Scrip," believes that the proposed plan in California would not be workable. He has repeatedly declared that stamp scrip would not work on a statewide basis and would not prove practical unless issued in strictly limited quantities. Many persons believe that the issue of a small quantity might act as a stimulant to the business mechanism, while a tremendous quantity would clog it and throw it out of kilter. Professor Fisher commends the good sense of Woergl in Bavaria, who issued $4,500 worth of stamp scrip for a town of 4,300 and then withdrew two-thirds of it to avoid inflation. This, Fisher says, "showed great wisdom on the part of the municipal administration, as it kept the purchasing power of scrip on a par with regular currency." Professor Fisher, it is reported, with other leading Eastern economic authorities, will be brought to California by business interests to talk against the measure. The drafters of the Life Retirement Payments Act admit that prices might rise and have provided for such a contingency by making possible the issuance of more warrants per capita. Many fear abnormal price rises and disastrous inflation if the plan is adopted.

Roy G. Owens and Sherman J. Bainbridge are the chief economists supporting the plan. Owens is responsible for most of the ingenious features of the well-documented act. He will serve as administrator if the amendment becomes law. Bainbridge, an able speaker, possesses a remarkable fund of technological data which has been used to good advantage in arguments for the amendment. Both men were formerly members of the once-powerful Utopian Society and have been the authors of several "money bills." The educational work of Owens and Bainbridge, coupled with the legal sagacity of Lawrence Allen, has contributed perhaps more than any other factor to the success of the movement.

The booklet describing the plan begins with a quotation from Roger W. Babson: "We will have prosperity for another two years . . . and then God help us!" Whatever its possibilities, the "Ham and Eggs" crusade cannot be airily dismissed as merely a crackpot scheme; in its motivation at least it is an economic revolution.

In the Wind

PRIME MINISTER CHAMBERLAIN'S last-minute deal with Hitler was warmly praised in the Spanish rebel press. *El Correo Español,* hailing Mr. Chamberlain's one-man methods, said: " . . . in the last few years democracy had begun to undermine the foundations of English security and continuity. Chamberlain, as far as was in his power, was able to restore them. . . . He has been able, therefore, to make a bold attempt to save Europe from war—thanks to all that is not democratic in England."

A PROMINENT WASHINGTON service which supplies material on current events to editorial writers recently prepared an issue for Columbus Day editorials. Entitled Two Successive Birthdays, it announced that "the day before Americans will be joining in celebrating the birthday of Columbus, Poles will have celebrated the birthday of Pulaski." Farther on the release warned editors that "October 12 as the birthday of Columbus is largely conjectural." Shortly after the material arrived, editors received a hasty postscript: "October 12, of course, is the day on which Columbus discovered America. . . . The birthday of Columbus is unknown."

THE WASHINGTON *POST* recently published an Associated Press "word picture" of "tomorrow's war." The last two paragraphs of the story, notes *Editor and Publisher,* appeared this way:

"The war may be won or lost as a result of the struggle on the industrial front.

"For quick results at the lowest cost, use *Post* classified ads."

THE ITALIAN government's bread policy has aroused growing public hostility. Bread intended for the poor is made partly of maize so that reserves of wheat may be available in case of war; white bread is being baked for the wealthy. The distinction has given rise to a new *mot* now heard around the countryside: "At last an opposition paper has appeared. It is the *Daily Bread.*"

THE RESIGNATION of Herbert Little, Scripps-Howard expert on labor and the Supreme Court, marks the departure of another liberal from that chain's Washington staff. Little will work for the National Youth Administration.

TO STIR flagging spirits Japanese officials launched a "national-mobilization" drive; as evidence of its auspicious start, Mr. Koyama, speaker of the House of Representatives, pointed to the cooperation of even "the mountains and rivers." He was referring to the Asama volcano, whose smoke usually drifts toward Joshu. This year it is blowing in the opposite direction, proving, said Mr. Koyama, that "the goddess of the mountain is cooperating with the nation in its national mobilization."

[*We invite our readers to submit material for In the Wind —either clippings with source and date or stories that can be clearly authenticated. A prize of $5 will be awarded each month for the best item.*—EDITORS THE NATION.]

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Issues and Men

BY OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

Dear Mr. Villard: In view of what is happening in Europe, and I agree with what you have recently written in *The Nation* regarding it, has it occurred to you that the world would be a better place today if the Germans had won the Battle of the Marne? Think it over, and perhaps you will do a piece on what you think the state of the world would be today if that had been the case instead of the Allies having been the "victors"—if victors they were.

(*Signed*) E. Y. (formerly of Prague)

THROUGH the mail has come this letter. I confess the thought in it has occurred to me more than once, when I have had a rare moment to think of what might have been. I suppose I rejoiced as much as any spectator at a distance that the French won the Battle of the Marne. We none of us had any idea that that meant the war would last for four years. We were as heartily glad that Paris was spared bombardment as the world is relieved now that for the moment Berlin, London, and Paris have escaped aerial attack. When we consider the present situation of the world, however, it is hard not to admit that the world would be far better off had the Germans won at the Marne.

Here are the facts: Had the Germans won at the Marne they would have taken Paris within a few days. Their advance guard had already seen the Eiffel Tower, and the government of France had moved from Paris to Bordeaux. With Paris in German hands it is difficult to believe that France could have held out or England could have resisted until Kitchener had raised and drilled his millions. Paris is the heart of France, but the Germans would not have stopped there. They would have swept westward to the sea and mopped up all the northern part of France at their leisure; it would then have taken only a small force to capture the Channel ports. Had the war ended then with Germany the victor, no less than 9,500,000 lives would have been saved and an amount of human misery and suffering prevented which no words and no figures can possibly describe. That is the one great outstanding thing.

Next Italy, Rumania, Bulgaria, Turkey, Greece, and the United States would not have entered the war, to say nothing of China, Japan, Cuba, Haiti, and other countries. As a result there would be no fascism today and certainly no bolshevism in Russia—if Russia had made peace immediately after the surrender of France. There would be no Nazis, no Hitler, no Mussolini. There would have been no Lusitania case and none of the thousand sinkings without warning of cargo and passenger ships. While the economic shock of the war would have been great, if it had lasted only three months the present economic prostration of the world would never have come to pass. There would not have been the millions of unemployed all over the globe. We should not have seen the rise of the intense nationalist movements or the drift toward autarchy, or the raising of tariffs everywhere. The world, for better or worse, would probably still be on the gold standard. The Austrian Monarchy would perhaps still exist, and the pitiful old Kaiser, with all his stupidity intact, would doubtless still be reigning.

So much for the credit side. On the debit side we should have an overbearing Germany—just what we have now—a Germany dominant in Europe, with France in its power—exactly as is the case today. The individual German would be so puffed up with pride and arrogance as to be just as unbearable to all civilized people as the Nazis are today. Germany would still be misgoverning its colonies; it would undoubtedly have grabbed a piece of Belgium and added more French territory to German Alsace-Lorraine. Poland would not have been reconstituted, and the Kaiser would probably have helped himself to a good bit of the Ukraine. Undoubtedly military limitations would have been put upon France, its fleet would have been reduced to insignificance, its people condemned to the paying of indemnities which would probably approximate the vast sums they are now paying for their Maginot lines, their increased fleet, their greatly enlarged army, and their huge air force. Europe would be an extremely unpleasant place to live in—just as it is today; and everybody would be wondering where the Kaiser would strike next—just as we are all wondering whether Belgium or Denmark or what is left of Czechoslovakia will be Hitler's next objective. Germany would be well on the road to Bagdad, precisely as it is today.

So there is the picture. I have honestly presented it as I see it. If I have omitted unintentionally any factors on the debit side I hope the readers of this column will point them out to me, for I want to be absolutely just. Finally I want to stress the fact that evil comes with every war, and that the lot of humanity would have been adversely affected whoever had won the World War. Militarism breeds militarism, and mass murder entails more mass murder. It is a pressing question whether those who took up the sword will not perish by it.

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E. M. FORSTER

BY MORTON DAUWEN ZABEL

E. M. FORSTER, at sixty, lends himself no more easily to superficial recognition than he did thirty-three years ago, when his first novel appeared. He offers few of the appeals that today qualify a novelist for popularity or timely respect: no dogmatic beliefs in politics or social thought, no stylistic novelty or group affiliations, no yearly appeal to his public with a new book. For an author described by his publishers, with admissible justice, as the "most distinguished living English novelist," he suggests few tags of easy distinction; perhaps only one—that he has practiced with success the difficult strategy of writing little but making it stand for much, of keeping the taste of his readers and critics tantalized and asking for more. He has now, for the second time, kept them waiting fourteen years for a new novel, yet if he were to publish one tomorrow no book would be more eagerly or expectantly read.

This attraction has been strong in his career from its beginning. He published his first novel, "Where Angels Fear to Tread," in 1905; his fourth, "Howards End," when he was just over thirty in 1910; his fifth and latest, "A Passage to India," in 1924. To these he had on occasion added two collections of tales, three of essays, a life of Lowes Dickinson, and, as a by-product of war service in Egypt, a guide to Alexandria. He has contributed to the liberal reviews. None of his fictions came announced by the trumpets of innovation or technical sensation. If popularly read (as two of them were), they could be taken as witty and topical comedies in the line of Meredith, brisk in language and insight, agreeably diverting in romantic interest. They showed plots of lithe and graceful movement, as insinuating in their darting charm as Jane Austen's, barbed by wit and comment, and filled with characters who had the art of springing into quick and familiar animation with their first speeches. Whatever dissent, perplexity, or irritation they might leave to tease the mind, they did little to disturb the literary conventions; they could even deal in the genial satire and ironic-whimsical fantasy that belong to the more spinsterish side of English fiction. Yet as time goes on these books persist and cut deeper into the memory. Of the "new" English novelists who made their mark between Hardy's retirement and the war, he is the only one, except for Conrad and Lawrence, who survives as an intimate force among the younger talents of the present decade. His energy has grown from a hard center of moral and intellectual realism. He has no stylistic followers and perhaps few disciples in thought, yet if one were fixing the provenance of Auden's generation, Forster's name—whatever the claims of James, Lawrence, or Eliot—would suggest the most accurate combination of critical and temperamental forces, the only one stamped by the peculiarly English skeptical sensibility that survived the war with sanity and prepared the day for a reassessment of the tradition and delusion that made the war possible. Today his special position is contested by no other talent.

It has remained, however, for 1938 to produce the first full sketch of his career. I. A. Richards, Mrs. Woolf, and recently Austin Warren have been among the few to write pointedly about his ideas. Now Rose Macaulay,* with less penetration but with high-spirited enthusiasm, gives a full-scale account of his achievement, writing as a member of his own pre-war generation, with a feminist zeal for tolerance and an evangelist's zest for the liberal life. She writes like a Forster heroine; she might be Margaret Schlegel: "Not beautiful, not supremely brilliant, but filled with something that takes the place of both qualities—something best described as a profound vivacity, a continual and sincere response to all that she encounters in her path through life." Anyone who has kept those phrases in mind as suggesting Forster's own temperament will admit her as a qualified witness, though she continuously obstructs her profitable labor and keen sense of period by a strenuous plan of skittish humor and reproval that are less acceptable today than they were in the Edwardian era. She has not written the book that Forster by this time deserves, but it should revive the reading of his books and thus improve our critical intelligence of the novel at the present dubious juncture of its history.

Forster's character was initially fixed by pre-war Cambridge, the university pictured in "The Longest Journey" as a last refuge of the spirit, of detachment and humanism, a lonely defender of the article of faith that Forster has clung to throughout the dislocations and betrayals of his lifetime: "to see life steadily and to see it whole." The weary evangelism of Arnold's phrase may not do Forster justice, but no better label for his particular dedication of purpose in a confusing century can be named, and its classic accent also reminds one of the other source

*The Writings of E. M. Forster. By Rose Macaulay. Harcourt, Brace and Company. $2.50.

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of his idealism—the humanism of Greece. To these symbols of stability he soon added fertilizing enthusiasms: for Italy and the Mediterranean, that "exquisite lake" which remains "the human norm"; for Dante, whom he evaded intellectually only to find him the modern man's severest spiritual guide, the great master of the truth that the lost Way may be found again; for Egypt and Asia Minor with their lessons in decadence; and finally for India, with its image of man's supreme division between matter and essence, mortality and spirit. These influences came to test and enrich a nature that was natively reticent and bifocal, conditioned on one side by the cant, intolerance, and complacency of English middle-class "culture," with its fear of feeling and its muddled energies, and on the other by a critical attraction toward the mystic and impenetrable forces of human nature, the vital health of the South and the spiritual absolutes of the East. Out of that opposition were bred two of Forster's greatest assets: his liberal skepticism, morally uncompromising and ruthless, with its dialectic of refusing to simplify opposites by dogma or mandate, whether studied in men, nations, or events; and, secondly, the basic theme of all his books.

For like most responsible novelists and poets, like Conrad and Lawrence, he has a single theme. Conrad made his the human illusion of values, compelled out of negation or despair by the mortal necessity of action and sacrifice. Lawrence took for his the vital principle of sexual energy, redeeming the modern man's enervation of mind and spirit. Forster sees this same dichotomy. It was a common inheritance from the nineteenth century. He made his object the search for the *wholeness* of truth; the synthesis of matter and essence, of civilization with its inhibitions and nature with its blind energy, of the fragments and denials on which life is commonly founded and the total vision of reality that man's sloth or cowardice forbids him to unveil.

> Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die.

This contact is not the formal compromise of philosophers or the tepid synthesis of latter-day humanists. It is a vital tension of elements, the "proportion" that comes only through a passionate experience of both life and idea.

> The business man who assumes that this life is everything, and the mystic who asserts that it is nothing, fail, on this side and on that, to hit the truth. . . . Truth, being alive, [is] not halfway between anything. It [is] only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm, and though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to insure sterility.

This concept of proportion, applied to the contemporary world, leaves Forster advocating a counsel of latitude and prudence that may fall flatly on the ears of modern believers. It makes him the exponent of those guttering ideals of tolerance, human sympathy, democracy, and freedom that he recently restated in *The Nation*. It may seem to remove him to the remote framework of humanitarian liberalism, with its League of Nations dreams and Plato-Goethe-Shelley trinitarianism, that he constructed as the setting for his friend Lowes Dickinson. Those who leave him in this bracket severely mistake his force and sincerity, as well as his art. It is true that he believes our psychic natures alone refuse to be compelled by the simplifying codes of social justice and political progress, and that no dogma ever succeeded in respecting the full complexity of human nature or destiny. But he does not evade the fundamental realism of that nature, committed to its endless search for certitude, driven to its desperate victories through every conceivable impediment of delusion and insincerity, and stricken from its birth by "the Primal Curse," which is not the knowledge of good and evil but "the knowledge of good-and-evil." This knowledge allows no easy formulation, and no access except through struggle and grief. Even then it suffers mere glimpses of itself. Yet in the face of its tragic and stupendous challenge Forster recommends no cynicism or resignation. He no more resigns himself to the riddle and ambiguity of truth than does mankind itself. He keeps his senses and sympathies, as well as his mind, on the stretch. If he shirks the obvious conditions of moral partisanship, it is with an agnostic's firmest fidelity: the truth exists, it will be known, it alone insures freedom.

To redeem this somewhat crusted liberalism from the curse of Dante's Trimmers, to which most present-day social or religious critics would condemn it, requires a remorseless passion for human nature, as well as the art to express it. Forster's novels show how far he possesses both. Whether laid in Italy, England, or India, they oppose the "prose" of life to its "passion." The prose lies chiefly in the falsity, cant, and philistinism of the English middle-class world: in suburban "culture," in the gimcrack Etonian pretensions of Sawston School, in the racial and sexual snobbery of Florentine pensions, in big business with "its outer world of telegrams and anger," in the brutal officialdom of Chandrapore. It comes from people afraid of their inner natures who dare not say "I": not only Napoleon, Rhodes, Morgan, and the modern dictators, but Mr. Vyse, Mr. Wilcox, the Callendars, the Pembrokes, the Reverend Cuthbert Eager, and that supreme embodiment of twisted bigotry, Mrs. Failing. The passion lies in the life of vital grace and spontaneity in Cambridge, Tuscany, and Greece, in vivacious natures like Margaret Schlegel, Lucy Honeychurch, and Dr. Aziz, in sensibilities driven to tragedy by their crippled emotions like Rickie Elliott, Helen Schlegel, and Leonard Bast, and in children of uncon-

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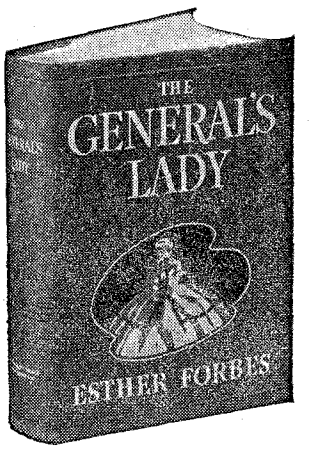

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Charles Laughton and I

By Elsa Lanchester (Mrs. Charles Laughton)

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querable nature like Gino and Stephen Wonham. Between these opposites exist the mediators, the tormented searchers for the connection that will harmonize and resolve the tragic antitheses of mankind: disillusioned intelligences like Ansell and Fielding, or unconscious mystics like Mrs. Wilcox and Mrs. Moore, who, usually in old age, touch the hem of the mystery, and shuddering at the tragedy of life, "the horrors of the universe and its smallness," see in "the twilight of the double vision" a redemption through some other-worldly revelation that snatches them from the abyss where lies coiled "the serpent of eternity made of maggots."

In some of these tales love, which Forster has never dramatized as a complete experience, comes as a solvent ("A Room with a View"); sometimes it is brotherly affection that desperately survives racial hates ("A Passage to India"); once it is social calamity that breaks down hostility ("Howards End"); once, in "The Longest Journey," which is Forster's crudest but most personal and passionate novel, tragedy destroys without saving, and only the unconscious life of nature is left to exist in its passive strength. Occasionally in the slighter allegories an arbitrary triumph of light is permitted. But mostly Forster leaves his characters and plots as complex and unresolved as he found them. The truth has been glimpsed, but that glimpse may have blinded its conquerors. Or the novel closes with the effect of having revealed a crisis of human relations, a titanic collision of shrouded forces, a Way of life clutching the brink of ruin, and with nothing solved. The harmony has gleamed briefly. By test and agony, by doubt and proof, the blight of skepticism must be fought and fought again, the futility of human desolation must be routed, and life must be affirmed. Forster has inherited that responsibility from both Dante and Montaigne.

He has expressed it in five novels, and leaves his admirers wondering if he will ever write another. Miss Macaulay debates this question in her closing pages. By good fortune he may, but if he does not the question will not remain too mysterious. He has no taste for repeating himself, and he has no interest in routine fictional ingredients. Each of his other books seized—out of personal experience, the social dilemmas of the pre-war years, or the huge racial and political enigma of modern India—a moral problem held in that state of suspense that invites the probing curiosity of the skeptical critic. Each one allowed him to exercise his disillusioned sincerity upon human problems thrown into vivid focus by great collisions of force or passion whose appeasement lay beyond the novelist's scope or ambition. Today, in the arena of post-war conflicts between tyrannies and absolutes, the problems of personal morality are dwarfed, and in the strife of greater and often anti-human forces, the liberal agnostic, with his sincerity and bitter reasonableness, is dwarfed too. His voice is tentative and compassionate; it is swiftly drowned in the noise of dogmas and manifestos. And possibly Forster has come to feel what Henry James felt when he abandoned "The Ivory Tower": that his comedy and tragedy of morals have been blasted to perdition by forces of greed and evil greater than any he has yet dramatized. To scale down the present decade's huge bewilderment to the size of one of his novels, even if he employed the almost miraculous methods of "A Passage to India," would be an appalling task. He hates fascism and has his doubts about communism, but his own generation's faith in democracy and liberal justice still holds his loyalty. And the moral dissolution of the present moment may baffle his skill as well. Whatever the reasons for his hesitation, he hesitates, and still it remains questionable if any other living novelist would quicken our sense of the decade's vital issues as subtly as he could. Meanwhile that sense has already profited by the stimulation of his other books, by the hard sinew of their intelligence and by their keen articulation of moral problems most modern novelists have been content merely to suggest. For the world of practical affairs, these virtues may not seem enough today, but for the world of critical and creative writers, they are virtues that are more than ever in demand. His firm and lifelong grasp of them has not only made him an instructor of a new generation of English talents; it has insured that his own talent has been strengthened, beyond its original detachment, in positive values and that, to paraphrase his verdict on Conrad, the secret casket of his genius contains not a vapor but a jewel.

Notes by the Way

THE American exhibition at the Museum of the Jeu de Paume in Paris, brought together by A. Conger Goodyear of the Museum of Modern Art in New York City, gave rise to much comment in both Paris and New York. Though the exhibition was not, and could not be, exhaustive, it served to bring American art into a cumulative order, both of chronology and category, designed to give a comprehensive yet compact view of three centuries of creative effort in the United States in the various fields of painting, sculpture, architecture, popular art, photography, and the cinema. Such a view could not but crystallize for the foreign observer what had perhaps been before only a vague idea of the extent and quality of the art of this still, for Europe, "new country." And since this vagueness about American art is quite as profound, if not more so, in our own country, it is both unfortunate and ironical that this exhibition, brought together in response to the characteristic French demand for enlightenment and synthesis, could not have been carried back to America and shown intact to the American public. (A fragment of it, representing thirty-two artists, is now on view at the Downtown Gallery in New York.) The catalogue of the Jeu de Paume exhibition, which has recently come to hand, intensifies the feeling of regret that the exhi-

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bition is being dispersed, and that its exhibits are to be once more buried alive in their respective private collections or in scattered public museums.

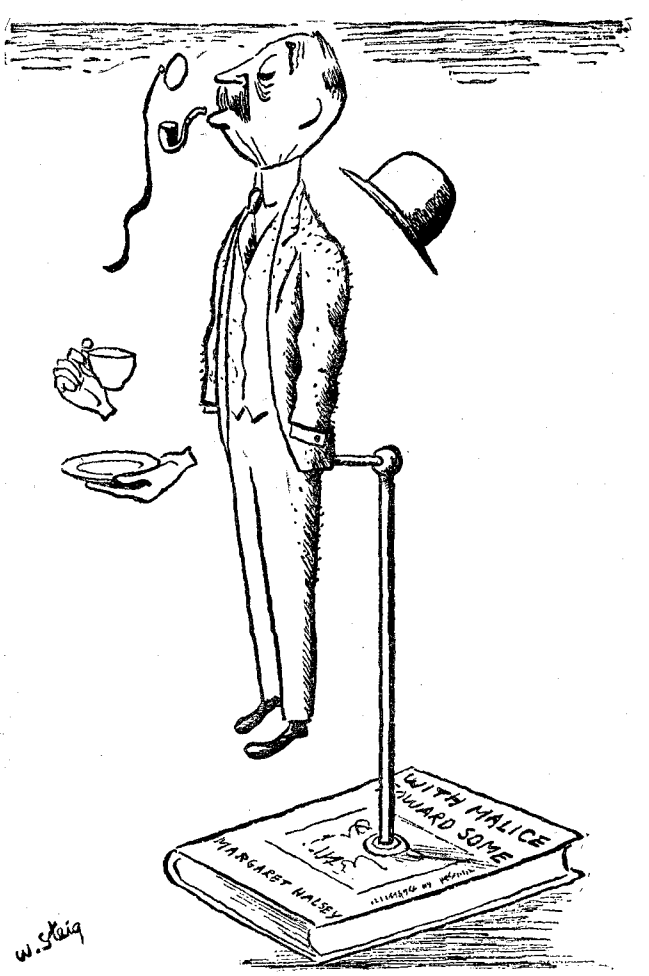
Lacking the exhibition, the catalogue itself is a useful guide to our artistic history. It is a book of some 200 pages, including 103 reproductions. It contains brief surveys of the various arts by American experts, each followed by a list of the items displayed in Paris. It contains also, for the visual- and busy-minded, a chart which notes in parallel columns the principal events of American history, technology, literature, architecture, painting, sculpture and the graphic arts, photography, and the cinema. Most of the book is printed in both French and English. The chart is all French both in language and emphasis. The second section, for instance, is titled Guerre de l'Indépendance 1776-1781: Alliance Française 1778. And here we find the Louisiana Purchase in reverse French: "Napoléon vend la Louisiane."

* * * *

Among the many discussions provoked in this country by the Jeu de Paume exhibit the most extensive was undoubtedly that of Edward Alden Jewell, who in six successive Sunday editions of the New York *Times* reported what the French critics had to say and devoted many columns to the question whether there is an American art. His answer was strongly affirmative—it was also pretty long-winded, which comes no doubt of writing for the limitless *Times*—and I should be the last to quarrel with that affirmation. But in general it was a little vague and in the course of the six Sundays he made one statement with which it will not, for some time, be too late to take issue: "All save the most determined quibblers, I think, will agree with [Robert] Henri and others who have espoused the same cause that we know what America means to us, what it means to be Americans." At the risk of being set down as a determined quibbler, I wonder. To my mind there has been far too much vague assertion of this sort and much too little concrete and precise analysis of "what American means to us, what it means to be Americans." And surely one of the most effective obstacles to obtaining knowledge is the assumption that we already possess it. An understanding of one's own history and culture and their relation to world history and culture is a major element in the artist's maturity in whatever field; just as self-knowledge is indispensable to his more personal maturity as an individual. Many American artists no doubt possess it. But who would deny that many do not and that the groping period is far more prolonged in the case of the American, be he exceptional or average, than, say, in that of the Frenchman? There are, to be sure, cultural islands in our vast American sea in which a child growing up may attain, as he should, by absorption, this basic competence of knowledge and understanding, from which he may then send out his own fresh shoots. All too often, our education being the scattered and "elective" thing it is, he must work out his intellectual development alone, and as if it had never been done before—with the result that our literature and our art are full of repetitious and unsure beginnings and relatively poor in distinctive and full-bodied culminations. A sense of history and the memory of things past have so often functioned in this country only as a form of reactionary and stupid patriotism that tradition had become for many people synonymous with reaction. Within recent years, however, there has grown up a new and creative use and cultivation of the sense of the past as an instrument for enriching the present and the future. Against the vague ignorance about the past which has made the Daughters of the American Revolution one of the most benighted organizations extant, we may now set the specific knowledge of our early arts and crafts and plain history obtained in the researches, among others, of the federal art projects. And we may be sure that the impact of the Index of American Design and of the American Guide Series will be anything but reactionary. On the contrary, such collections, put into the hands of young Americans, will provide an impetus to the imagination only to be appreciated by those of an earlier generation to whom it was not available.

* * * *

The personal example should be invoked at most sparingly; yet in matters of this kind it may often demonstrate a point more vividly than impersonal generalization. For that reason I dare to cite the cultural influence—which could with happy exceptions be described as the lack of cultural influences—that played over my own fairly typical American youth. In the Western mountain state in which I grew up the carriers of culture were few and far between. A music teacher here, a high-school instructor there, libraries whose limited treasures were for the most part literally closed books because their treasures were unsuspected and there were few



Book Review

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to say "Open." These were and still are the resources of the American child of American middle- and lower-middle-class parents—and there are no others—in communities far removed from the few centers of culture and tradition we possess. History was a collection of bewigged portraits and dates that were merely numbers. Art was a series of dismal prints, seen through glass darkly, of ancient art utterly removed from its context. American art did not exist, for me, even as an idea. In my case the principal living connection with any culture was a parent who had spent his first seventeen years in Virginia before his migration westward from the ruins of a society that had always been anachronistic to a frontier where a society could scarcely be said to exist. And even this parent, by the time I made his acquaintance, was removed by almost half a century of the Western frontier struggle for economic existence from a youth that must have seemed by then unreal. His own education had ended at seventeen, yet the tradition of culture, reinforced by his emotional attachments to his own parents, persisted with amazing vitality. His reading was confined to the daily papers and the *Saturday Evening Post*—though he did cling to Byron's poetry—but his habit of reading was of a far higher order than what he read. It was his father who had known the classics, but he brought to me intact an insistence that Latin must be learned, along with an intellectual skepticism to pose against the crude religion of that time and place—or of any other. From his mother, who had been a pianist and composer for her own pleasure, he transmitted, with a few silver spoons, a belief in music.

With just such fugitive equipment, the average American child has too often begun his journey toward maturity. It is a journey that is still today far longer than it need be. Adequate equipment, once it was provided, would not, of course be enough. Without the enlightened teacher and the individual impulse, a sense of the past, particularly if it is vague and undiscriminating, can produce atavism and reaction. But we can dispense with it, in its form as knowledge continued, only at the cost of remaining adolescent.

* * * *

In her book on Charles Sheeler, Constance Rourke discusses the sense of craftsmanship as one of the main lines in the American tradition and poses the problem of maintaining it in a nation which has turned so whole-heartedly from handicrafts to the machine. It is a genuine problem. Yet one wonders whether a nation so thoroughly conditioned to skill —travel through unskilled Russia if you would discover how deep that conditioning is—can ever really lose the sense of craftsmanship; whether the concept of precision, so deeply ingrained, which shows itself alike in the precision dancers at Radio City and the latest machine tools, will not somehow continue to assert itself. The recent exhibition at Julien Levy's gallery of the water colors used in the production of Walt Disney's "Snow White" suggests that it will. The delicacy and exquisite precision of these drawings of ephemeral though charming subjects set one to inquiring hopefully what these unknown workers in Walt Disney's cartoon factory paint in their spare time and suggest that at least in one corner of Hollywood the craftsmanship of the artisan persists. For complete contrast Mr. Levy displayed in a room next to the Disney show a collection of Gracie Allen's "surrealistic" drawings whose utter innocence of craftsmanship added to their comic effect. They were exhibited with a small admission charge for the benefit of the suffering Chinese, which lent an additional "surrealistic" touch. Aside from that I suspect Mr. Levy was also telling certain expert craftsmen among our artists that the mere surprise jumbling of objects, however well drawn, comes no closer to being genuine surrealism than Gracie Allen's effusions. He is planning to continue his course in November with an exhibit of surrealist paintings by Frieda Rivera, wife of Diego. My own curiosity about surrealism exceeds my understanding of it. Let it be said to those in similar case that judging from a limited preview of a few examples of Mrs. Rivera's work, the November exhibition promises to be both instructive and intensely interesting. MARGARET MARSHALL

BOOKS

The Decoration of Novels

THE BUCCANEERS. By Edith Wharton. D. Appleton-Century Company. $2.50.

MRS. WHARTON has told how she was haunted, before the books in which they ultimately appeared were written, by her characters, or, even, by their disembodied names. In her autobiography, "A Backward Glance," she mentioned a name then in her mind: Laura Testvalley. "The Buccaneers," Mrs. Wharton's last and unfinished novel, gives Laura Testvalley her scene and character. She is a governess, granddaughter of a hero of the Risorgimento (Gennaro Testvaglia), cousin to Dante Gabriel Rossetti, once employed by a duchess, and later governess in an "old" New York family. She goes on to the higher wages offered by a "new" family (whose money is based on "deals" and financial manipulation); takes the fortunes of the younger daughter in hand and pilots her, over the heads of the disapproving Newport and New York sets, to London, and into a titled marriage. The manuscript breaks off before the novel's denouement: Laura's sacrifice of personal happiness in order that her former pupil, now the ranking duchess of England, may escape from her dull duties and her dull duke into "deep and abiding love" with a lover. The outline left by Mrs. Wharton describes the entire plot very clearly.

It is interesting to see how Henry James's insistence on "form" in the novel was simplified by his friend and follower, Mrs. Wharton, into mere adherence to plot. The plot must proceed, through all its ramifications, even though characters be wrenched out of shape to serve it. Minor figures, put in purely to prop up the plan, soon are shuffled away, and are featureless from the beginning. The long arm of coincidence snaps up the roving actors and places them down neatly in surroundings cleverly arranged to suit their situation. The background is filled in with great color and accuracy; there is continual movement and interest in the action; the details of life in drawing-room, ducal seat, and dower-house, on Saratoga verandas, in a ruined Cornish

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castle, on American railway platforms, all suitably lighted by the atmosphere of the '70's, are written down by a mistress of *genre*. But "The Buccaneers," for all Mrs. Wharton's cleverness and skill, is dead at the heart. The book brings out, however, the way in which Mrs. Wharton's work formed a bridge from the nineteenth-century novel to the magazine fiction of the present, where in a superficially arranged scene manners, clothes, food, and interior decorations are described carefully and at length; how she was, in herself as it were, the whole transitional period of American fiction, beginning in the bibelot and imported-European-culture era of the late nineties, and ending in the woman's-magazine dream of suburban smartness.

The essential numbness in her novels—with the exception of "Ethan Frome," where her talent for local color and her insight into the simpler ingredients of human character succeeded, because she did not attempt too much—goes back to the fact that she based her values not upon a free and rich feeling for life but on a feeling for decorum and pre-Wall Street merchant respectability. James praised early in her career "her diabolical little cleverness, the quality of intention and intelligence in her style, and her sharp eye for an interesting kind of subject." Added to these gifts was a highly trained taste, a thorough acquaintance with the "great world" of her time, and a passion for artistic people, provided, of course, that their background and manners conformed to the rather stuffy standards of the late-nineteenth-century upper bourgeoisie. She admired, it should be remembered, not only Henry James but also Paul Bourget. An example of her fundamental bias against the disordered life of the artist is her astonishment when she discovered that George Sand's home, Nohant, showed no sign of the wild life which had streamed through it; it did not look *déclassée*, but on the contrary traditional and respectable. (The sympathetic attitude expressed in James's two essays on Sand is in strong contrast to Mrs. Wharton's surprise.) And Mrs. Wharton's mildly ironic description of life in great English houses should be put against the true dissection apparent in James's approach to the same subject. For the difference between a subject treated with ingenuity and one treated with imagination, Nan St. George, the "new" rich girl in "The Buccaneers," and her family can be set beside Daisy Miller and hers. We love the living people and merely watch the puppets.

LOUISE BOGAN

The Ghost of Henry Adams

LETTERS OF HENRY ADAMS, 1892-1918. Edited by Worthington Chauncey Ford. Houghton Mifflin Company. $4.50.

IF THE querulous ghost of Henry Adams is paying any attention just now to the affairs of a world and country for which the man himself had little respect, it must be surprised at the vogue enjoyed by the writings of a certain scholar of whom Adams never thought very highly. And that anyone should think it worth while to bring out a second instalment of Adams's letters in this hundredth year after the man's birth and the twentieth after his death—that must seem to such a ghost only another example of human absurdity. But of course the work which Mr. Ford here brings to a conclusion is in no way absurd. Henry Adams, whether he knew it or not, wrote always brilliantly and sometimes profoundly. Whether right or wrong, he was the sort of man to whom ideas occur. His experience of life was remarkably wide, and he knew a host of the most interesting people of his time. Besides, he was an Adams. These letters, perhaps the last fruit we shall have from this very old tree, are worthy of the long and arduous but not very expert attention that Mr. Ford has devoted to them.

One could wish that they made a pleasanter impression. In 1892, when the first of them was written, Adams already thought of himself as an old man. His next twenty-six years were spent in the enjoyment of increasingly low spirits and the accumulation of materials for gloom. His nieces and friends, his champagne and little dinners, glimpses of natural beauty, and perhaps also the writing of his later books, gave him some periods of mild happiness, but the human spectacle—unless in Tahiti or the mountains of Mexico—was always depressing. These letters, for all their brilliancy, are a record of mood rather than of thought, and the mood of almost unbroken fault-finding which they present is monotonous. Whether Adams is thinking of England, of Europe, or of America, he foresees imminent disaster and downfall. He is confident that white civilization cannot endure against the barbarism of the colored races. And most of his estimates of individual men are of the same sort. Thus, his scorn for the "childlike and infantile" Theodore Roosevelt is equaled only by his contempt for the "big-fat-boyishness" of Taft. Several years before the rest of the world he decided that William II of Germany was "insane." Now and then one suspects a touch of affectation in his expression of this mood, as where he writes, sitting alone in a London hotel at the time of an influenza epidemic, that he is "happy and contented" because, at all events, he is not "bored by Andrew Lang, Edmund Gosse, and Sidney Colvin."

The modern world, especially in America, failed to please Henry Adams because, in his opinion, it had no faith to set beside that of his beloved twelfth century or that of the third and fourth centuries before Christ. The best that he could say of us was that our present society, its ideals and purposes, are "dregs and fragments of some primitive, essential instinct now nearly lost." He believed that the modern world can only pervert and degrade the conceptions of the primitive instinct of art and feeling." One recognizes here the "primitivism" of a tired and hypersensitive mind turning away from the weight and complexity of modern thought toward the puerile *élan vital* of Bergson. How little this brilliant man really knew himself and how incapable he was of close metaphysical thought is shown by the fact that in the very passage just quoted he declared that he is "a creature of our poor old Calvinistic, St. Augustinian fathers." But there is a deep gulf between St. Augustine or even John Calvin on the one hand and "primitive essential instinct" on the other.

Henry Adams was one of the first to assert that he was not "educated," and after reading through his letters—amazingly well-informed and wide-ranging though they are—one is inclined to agree with him. He never attained normality of thought or feeling, and his mind was not coherent. One

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may say of the letters as someone has already said of the "Education" that they are "an extraordinary record of intellectual and moral aimlessness." Henry Adams was a brilliant man, not a wise one. He used privileges of wealth and leisure and position such as we can give to very few individuals for the finding of reasons why he did not like his country or his time. He was so impressed by his discovery that we have not the religious faith of the twelfth century as to ignore that social faith which we have. One of his main observations upon the America of his later years amounted to this, that it was not an increasingly safe place for elderly gentlemen living upon their investments. With that observation we may agree.

ODELL SHEPARD

The Poor in Spirit

NO STAR IS LOST. By James T. Farrell. Vanguard Press. $3.

IN HIS new series of novels, of which "No Star Is Lost" forms the second part, Mr. Farrell gives convincing evidence of his desire to tell the whole truth about the Chicago Irish. Whereas in "Studs Lonigan" the poolroom loafers occupied the spotlight, the present series shows a more "normal" cross-section of his people. The characters here are rough but not tough. This volume carries on the story of Mrs. O'Flaherty's family in its two branches headed by her son Al, a traveling salesman, and her son-in-law Jim O'Neill, a teamster. The former's chief worry is to make himself and his household respectable; the latter's is to get enough for his children to eat. If in the trilogy only Studs and his cronies were drawn in the round, Farrell now shows his ability to create characters of a variety of types. He has a better understanding of older people and a subtler insight into the minds of children. Even his priests and nuns have their grays and their splotches of white as well as their blacks.

Accordingly the novelist has set himself a more difficult problem. He has written that his chief aim in his books has been to show the spiritual desolation of those Americans whom he knows best. In the case of Studs's gang the game was easy, for their debauches brought swift retribution. But the O'Flahertys and O'Neills, although they are poor in spirit, are not so near to utter pauperism: they have their values, some genuine and others of the nature of life illusions, which are not automatically self-defeating. Al is a social climber, and he loses his temper and beats up his young nephew—an act of which he later repents—but he is usually moved by generous and kindly impulses, he has a confused yearning for literary culture, and he shows uncommon sympathy and tact in dealing with his lovelorn sister Margaret. Margaret is consoled by her self-pity; and the children live in their world of make-believe. Although Mrs. O'Flaherty is a hard woman, she has her wakes and visions. Even the pitiful drudge Lizz is kept going by her spunk, her love for her children, her salvation magic, and her sense of superiority to the Negro neighbors. The religion of these people does not carry through the whole of their lives; it does not solve any of their major problems; and it loses its force as the family rises in the scale of income and education. But it helps in some measure to keep them out of trouble with the law and with each other, and it gives them such fitful moments of poetry as they ever achieve. Although they all are harassed by anxiety of one sort or another, they get a great deal of satisfaction out of their quarrels and reconciliations, their social pretenses, and their dramatizing of themselves. The spiritual squalor is there, but it must be found by the perceptive reader and is not pounded into him.

Farrell has shown a similar reserve in exploring the economic dimension of his world. Material poverty is generally presented only in so far as it contributes to poverty of the spirit. But the avoidance of thesis-writing makes all the more forceful the concluding chapters in which the youngest O'Neill dies of diphtheria and Lizz has a miscarriage, as a result of the doctor's neglect of them for the sake of his paying patients. In this volume social criticism, in both the narrower and the wider sense, is conveyed principally through the secondary characters. Farrell's interest in the two characters who receive the most space, Margaret and ten-year-old Danny, is primarily psychological. Throughout the book Margaret is expecting from her lover word which does not arrive, and we are given harrowing scenes in which she alternately drinks herself into delirium and tries to reform, gives herself to a lout in order to forget, and tries to kill herself and the family by turning on the gas. A counterfoil to Studs, Danny is despite his lapses into mischief a "nice" boy, and we are shown in great detail his games and his sub-pubescent interest in girls. He is, in fact, such an average American youngster that his chief effect here seems to be little more than to cause the reader to identify Danny's experiences with those of his own childhood. But if Danny's biography is continued in subsequent volumes, he will be a more complex and more articulate character than Farrell has yet presented.

The limitations of Farrell's realism have frequently been pointed out. He is not becoming less garrulous, and there is repetition beyond what is needed to convey the monotony in the lives of his characters. It is necessary to read his books rapidly, and they do not yield new depths of significance upon rereading. A more concentrated and more imaginative type of art—of which indeed Farrell in a number of passages has shown himself capable—has greater aesthetic intensity and perhaps also greater effectiveness as social criticism. When all this has been granted, it is nevertheless particularly important at the present time to have novelists who are recreating as directly and as fully as they can the life that they have experienced. The more symbolic type of art can easily get out of touch with reality, and to this tendency documentary realism supplies a much-needed corrective.

PHILIP BLAIR RICE

Jack London as Legend

SAILOR ON HORSEBACK. By Irving Stone. Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.

THE story of Jack London, in Mr. Stone's enthusiastic narrative, would seem to belong more to the saga of the West than to American literary history. On the whole, Mr. Stone has chosen to take the man and let the writer go, and the choice has its obvious rewards. For Jack London's life satisfies all the clichés; it was a life of action, of adventure, of romance. It is as good as a novel, at least a certain kind

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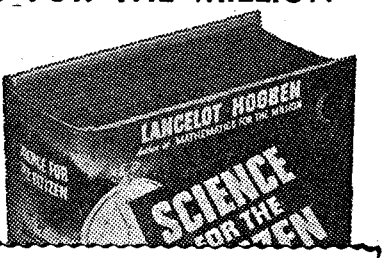

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of novel, but the point is whether we do not want the biography of an influential novelist to be something better and something different. Whether it be Jack London or Disraeli or Byron or Rimbaud or any other writer whose career was spectacular, we are ultimately interested in trying to understand it. Actually it is far harder to write a sound life of Jack London than of William Dean Howells, or of Byron than of Scott. For the geniuses who take to drink and take to women and are haunted by devils and driven to excess, the so-called bohemians and rebels and immoralists, are easy to dramatize; but they are sometimes confoundedly hard to explain.

From the standpoint of interesting the movie mind, the life of Jack London is, of course, a natural. He came into the world a bastard and went out of it a suicide. At thirteen he was scuttling across choppy San Francisco Bay in a catboat; at fifteen relishing the perils of an oyster pirate and living with a waterfront moll; at seventeen shipping before the mast of one of the last of the sailing ships; at eighteen riding the blinds to join Coxey's march on Washington, and ending up in jail. A few years later he dashed off to the Klondike; a few years after that to Japan during the Russo-Japanese War. His rise as a writer was staggeringly rapid, his output more staggering, his income more staggering still, and in time his fame circled the entire globe. Living a life patterned on Nietzsche, he preached a philosophy taken from Marx. He had—or thought he had—a great love, but married a woman he did not love at all, and left her for a women who snared him with mush that would have sickened the soul of Marie Corelli.

One can hardly not respond, with the excitement of a small boy, to this extraordinary tale. It is touched with something large and legendary and bacchanalian. But this, too, is the story of a man whose novels gripped the attention of the world; who defiantly and passionately preached socialism; who colored and in turn caught the color of the era of strenuous Americanism; who climbed and fell, whose powers flagged, whose idealism lost its influence. Mr. Stone has noted all these things faithfully enough—in a factual sense his book is very complete—but he has somehow not much illuminated them. One looks for a quality of analysis and interpretation that is simply not there.

Mr. Stone has, to be sure, his theories. He feels, for example, that London's illegitimacy had a decisive effect on his adult life. He feels that from his putative father, the astrologer W. H. Chaney, Jack London acquired many of his fighting and intellectual characteristics. These ideas are suggestive, they may be sound, but one questions whether Mr. Stone does not overemphasize their importance, and one feels that they do not leave enough play for what must have counted more heavily in London's life: environment and experience. The effect of either on Jack London is never adequately suggested; and the particular complexion of the Rooseveltian era during which London rose to celebrity is never sufficiently described. Mr. Stone is on better ground in stressing the conflict created in London by the contradictory messages of Nietzsche and Marx: there, clearly, were a pair of horses who would not run in harness, and if you add to them that furious mental and physical energy with which London kept going, you have your psychological problem in hand. The outcome, to be sure, was almost mathematically fixed; but how it came about, what went on inside Jack London, how well he understood himself, how well he understood other people, and life, and his mixed philosophy—these are things which "Sailor on Horseback" should explain far better than it does.

Most unsatisfactory of all is Mr. Stone's treatment of London as a writer. One is simply appalled by the kind of florid and banal prose that Mr. Stone singles out, from London's work, for intemperate praise. But such errors of taste mean much less than Mr. Stone's incapacity to assess London's work, to evaluate his ideas, to analyze his influence. Mr. Stone always tells us in some detail what the books are about, what ideas animated them, what success they had and among what readers. But he gives us no criticism that rises above the level of a journeyman book review. And searching criticism is wanted of a man who performed so exciting a mission in American literature, whose international reputation was rivaled, among Americans, only by Cooper's and Mark Twain's and Whitman's and Upton Sinclair's, and who today, by virtue of his pioneering, goes on being important.

Mr. Stone deserves our respect for conscientiously giving us all the facts. He deserves our praise for a vividly romantic autobiography. But he has not explained Jack London.

LOUIS KRONENBERGER

Far from the Madding Crowd

BLACK IS MY TRUELOVE'S HAIR. By Elizabeth Madox Roberts. The Viking Press. $2.50.

So rare is it in the life of a reviewer to read a book which seems to achieve perfection that the experience tends to leave him humble and inarticulate. "Black Is My Truelove's Hair" needs no comment or criticism. It needs only to be read. There is no other American love story to compare with it. Combining, as the title suggests, the directness and pure feeling of the English ballad with the lyricism of the great romantic novels, Miss Roberts's latest book calls to mind "The Ordeal of Richard Feverel," "The Return of the Native," and "Far from the Madding Crowd." Yet it has an unabashed simplicity, a direct approach to human nature and to all natural phenomena that these stylized and, in a sense, literary books lack.

Had Emily Dickinson written a novel this might have been her book. But the secluded house in Amherst lay in no fertile Kentucky farm land. In the rocky New England valley man's relation to the land is no rhythmic identification with the earth but a long, unrewarding struggle against starvation. Emily Dickinson's perception of nature was as direct as Miss Roberts's, but it was limited in scope to the flowers and birds and small creatures she encountered in her own personal experience. And whereas her poetry is in one sense concrete, the medium in which she expressed her emotions was metaphysical rather than physical. Miss Roberts's trees and flowers, her sheep and geese and cows and horses, her gardens and pastures are the livelihood, the core and backbone of the lives of her characters. Romantic, poetic, imaginative as is this love story, it is as fundamentally physical as the sun or the moon or the sea.

Miss Roberts's story is of people who accept unquestioningly their own identity with the processes of nature. Indeed,

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the one thwarted character in the book is the young truck-driver, whose only roots lie in his machine. "We'll not live any place," he says, "but be as free as air. Go and come. Home is where my hat falls off. Home is inside my skin. Come inside my skin out of the rain, my darlen." But Dena leaves him in spite of his threats of death and destruction, in spite of the inevitable disgrace of having to return unmarried to the village from which she has eloped in a moment of overwhelming passion for this strange and violent man.

"Once you get alive you have a right to go on," she says to herself on her desperate flight back home, away from the seven days of chaos he has made of her life. "A right to a life that makes good sense. . . . A hat on your head if the others have got hats. A name for yourself, your own name that you were born with, or his name when you marry. . . ."

This, then, is the theme of the book, "a life that makes good sense," and perhaps at no other time in the world's history would the life of these simple farm people, tending their herds and their crops, believing in the faith of the Catholic church as it was believed in centuries ago, expressing their passions with the directness of pagans, seem to express almost the only remaining logic.

The character of Nat Journeyman, wise and philosophic, tending his orchards by day where at night "there was love and frolic and the girls would shriek in their pleasure and romp in the half-light of the moon," is of the same universal band as the Reddleman in "The Return of the Native." But he has a humor, a saltiness that is essentially American. Fronia, the shrewd, twice-widowed, honest, but worldly wise sister of Dena, the heroine, is in her way as personal and as universal a character as the Wife of Bath. But it is not for the critic to list the characters in this book. The reader must experience them for himself. He will not soon forget them.

Entirely apart from Miss Roberts's insight into human nature, her inherent gifts as a poet, she is a novelist of brilliant technical ability. She has so completely mastered the use of suspense that whether she tells of an impending murder or the search for a lost thimble the reader follows her narrative with undivided absorption. But most significant perhaps of her achievements is her weaving into the pattern of her pastoral novel the mechanical devices of modern life in such a way that they seem as natural as the seasons and the growth of the trees.

> Journeyman had put on dark glasses to be able to look upward into the tops of the trees as he pumped the spray upward. . . . From the north way came the shallow knocking of a man's voice beating here and there through the stressed syllables of a song. Between these senseless tones was spread a low purr of music. Singing floated through the air, coming from no place. . . . The man who sang was in Louisville or in Chicago or elsewhere. Mingled and blended with the sound was the light wash of the spray as it pattered over the leaves.

One could continue indefinitely quoting passages of insight and beauty from "Black Is My Truelove's Hair" but there is no space. Nor is there time to discuss Miss Roberts's extraordinary use of colloquial language, a speech at once Elizabethan and contemporary. Suffice it to say that in "The Great Meadow" Miss Roberts wrote an intrinsically American historical novel which has never been surpassed; that in "The Time of Man" she gave a picture not only of the life of a share-cropper and his family in the South today but of all men who, owning no land, are still forced to draw their living from the soil. And in "Black Is My Truelove's Hair" she has created a love story that is both immediate and timeless.

MINA CURTISS

"Steffens Speaking"

THE LETTERS OF LINCOLN STEFFENS. Edited by Ella Winter and Granville Hicks, with a Memorandum by Carl Sandburg. Harcourt, Brace and Company. Two Volumes. $10.

EVEN though he once suggested to Ella Winter that she print some of his letters, I believe that Linc Steffens would have jibed and jibbed at the suggestion that any publisher would ever think of publishing two volumes of his correspondence to sell for $10. His mordant wit would have had free play. I confess that, well as I knew Steffens's work, I was skeptical. Now I am more than convinced. Whether they make or lose money, Harcourt, Brace have done a public service in publishing these volumes and in thus preserving the letters for posterity. In the first place they *are* Steffens. I can hear his voice in these letters as clearly as if he were in the room, as clearly as at the recent memorial services to James Weldon Johnson we heard his voice speaking to us out of a Victrola record made only a short time before his tragic end.

For Steffens wrote as he spoke. There was no effort to be polished, no desire to be the man of letters. He was just his own self. It is too bad he called his last book "Lincoln Steffens Speaking"; that should have been the title of these volumes. For here he is, just as whimsical, charming, elusive, fanciful, scoffing, and joking—seriously joking—as he was, and also just as amazingly penetrating and understanding, as wise and as unwise, as right and as mistaken, as contradictory and as paradoxical. If he often seemed Puck come to life to tell the mortals around him the fools they be, he was ever inspired by his deep desire to help—until finally he reached the point to which so many others have come, and, realizing how tremendous and irresistible are the forces making over society before our eyes, was content to be the calm commentator.

"I am not a Communist," he wrote on November 19, 1932. "I merely think that the next order of society will be socialist and that the Communists will bring it in and lead it." He saw the Socialists failing everywhere, and he thought he recognized the cause: "The Socialists *intend* only to do the best they can, which is not enough." Then he cited Harold Laski as "a good example; I know him personally. He wants too much besides socialism. The Communists want socialism. That got, they can get the rest." Today he could reinforce his point by pointing to Hitler and Mussolini. They know just what they want and when, and they are getting it. Still, with Communists today abandoning their sole quest in order to build a temporary front with the democracies, he might now alter this dictum. But it would not irk Steffens to have to do so; he was never afraid to let it be known that he had had to shift his ground. Indeed, he

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openly admitted it; it was part of his never-ending education and evolution.

That evolution is as clear as daylight in these letters. The first great step he took was to liberate himself from the belief he so ardently held as a reporter that the faults of our political, social, and economic life were due to the bad men who had got hold of the machinery; that we had only to expel the bad men and all would be well. He no longer desired to attack these bosses and super-business men personally; he even came to admire them, for he saw that they were able, resourceful, and powerful because they took advantage of the special privileges offered by the social system. He wanted to preserve this energy and forcefulness and put them to work building up and remodeling the whole business of our group life. Once he said to me, "The good people are the bad and the bad the good." It seemed at first like an amusing playing with words. How often has it not come back to me in the years of fighting since, when so often the good and the holy have held back all progress, upheld abuses, tortured the innocent, or approved their being broken on the wheel of ignorance and stupidity!

Always he sought to understand life, to see what went on behind the façades, to find the causes for the impending or the arrived collapse. Undoubtedly that weakened him so far as making the impression upon his time it was once thought he would make. He was baffled—again and again. He was always seeking some general principles to portray on a great canvas, and when he failed to find them or to picture what he did see he blamed among other things his college education. He was not one to scourge the money-changers out of the temple. His forte, and these letters prove it, was in dissecting and reporting the actions of the human beings about him. There may be bitter words in these letters; I don't seem to find them. Critical ones, yes, but not bitter. The older he grew the kindlier he became, the more forgiving, probably the more understanding. Yet it is a fact that men missed in him the clear-cut objectives which probably the reasonableness and the analytical character of his mind rendered impossible. It is perhaps true that his wit and his paradoxes, his worries, and—at times—his reticences deprived him of exercising to the full the power which nature intended should be his.

So in these letters we have the man really self-revealed—his friendships, the love he bore for three women, his adoration of the child born to him late in life to give him unending joy—truly "Steffens Speaking." How I wish I had the space to quote here from them! Some are classic, some riotously funny, and all stylistically distinguished. These letters were written to all sorts and kinds of persons; no man had wider contacts or more devoted friends. They describe many scenes and illumine much. Only occasionally do they disappoint. The very official secrecy of his remarkable mission to Russia with William C. Bullitt and Captain Pettit in 1919 prevented his portraying it in letters on the spot, and I must confess to a feeling that at the Peace Conference he did not realize to the full the disaster taking place. Never mind. The pulsing warmth of the portraits he has painted of innumerable friends, and above all of himself, far offset any inadequacies. These books I shall turn to as long as I may.

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

The Naturalization of Logic

LOGIC: THE THEORY OF INQUIRY. By John Dewey. Henry Holt and Company. $4.

THE philosophy of John Dewey has been one of the most important formative influences in the history of recent American thought. The basic principles of that philosophy are startlingly simple, and yet in their applications to various fields they appear to have an inexhaustible vitality. Because of the recurrence of these basic concepts in all Dewey's writings the present book will seem to the superficial reader as a reiteration or reorganization of the material of his preceding volumes. Actually what this book has in common with the rest of Dewey's philosophical works is the method and the leading principles of his philosophy. And even these principles are not merely restated, but reformed through their interaction with a nexus of new problems and new subject matter. The result is one of the most illuminating studies in the field of logical theory.

The basic hypothesis underlying Dewey's logic and expressing its naturalistic character is that "the logical principles involved in scientific method have themselves arisen in the progressive course of inquiry." In other words, these principles are the *forms* of inquiry only because they are the *formulations* of procedure. Their function is to describe the objective and generic traits of operations of inquiry. Without reference to these operations the logical principles have neither authority nor meaning. Logic is not an extraneous, a priori constriction imposed on reasoning but the residual product of a self-corrective procedure. It is a formulated art or technique of control in inquiry.

Naturalism in philosophy, as in art and literature, arose under the influence of the scientific world-view of the nineteenth century. But while in literature it has been on the whole a pessimistic expression of finality, destiny, and an ineluctable submission of man to nature, in Dewey's philosophy it is the very antithesis of such tragic determinism. The difference is radical. To the early philosophic and literary naturalism nature and her laws seemed to be inexorable antagonists of man and his pathetically human values. The entire weight of Dewey's philosophy, however, is directed against this dramatic dichotomy; not, as some critics believe, because this literary naturalism is out of harmony with the frontier optimism of American culture, but because it is unscientific and hence not genuinely naturalistic. For to be naturalistic means in Dewey's philosophy to naturalize thought and value, that is, to see them integrated with the material world in which they originate and function.

These remarks are not as irrelevant to the subject matter of logic as they may appear to be at first glance. The radical dissociation of values from their natural roots is but a phase of the more fundamental metaphysical dualism of form and matter which philosophers have sustained for many centuries. There have been few ideas in the intellectual tradition of our civilization which have had a more extended history or a more pervasive influence than this distinction between form and content. Theories of morality, law, society, and science revolved about pivotal doctrines of matter and form, and reflected this doctrinal orientation in concrete social enter-

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prises. A naturalistic logic, conceived as the theory of inquiry, offers the most fundamental analysis of the methodological forms and their relation to subject matter in these enterprises. It thereby furnishes them with a powerful instrument of progressive self-criticism and development.

It has been said that the peculiar character of Dewey's naturalism, with its emphasis on such concepts as organism, development, progression, and novelty, derives from the use of the biological rather than the mathematical or physical sciences as the patterns of scientific method. Such interpretation makes these concepts incidental and accidental to the subject matter of Dewey's philosophy. But while some support for this view may be found in Dewey's early philosophical antecedents, the significant fact still remains that thinking, inquiring, and knowing are biological phenomena, whatever else they may also be. If biological categories find application in Dewey's analysis of inquiry, it is, then, not because of some circumstance in Dewey's biography but because thought, which is somebody's thought, must have a biological function.

Thought or inquiry is never devoid of subject matter, and every subject matter is a matter of some sort, an existential matrix within which and with which some organism interacts. One type of such interaction is deliberate inquiry, but according to Dewey's logic the traits that differentiate deliberate inquiry develop out of biological activities not marked by those traits. Logic, therefore, like inquiry and its subject matter, is subject to evolution and can never attain a final formulation.

To hold this view is not to deny the existence or indispensability of primary logical principles. The theory is concerned only with their origin and use. Logical forms are used to guide inquiry to desired consequences, namely, to warranted assertions. Experience makes it evident that this desired consequence cannot be attained without certain conditions imposed on the materials of inquiry. When these conditions are abstracted and formulated they become logical forms, but they do not cease to be forms of subject matter.

The fundamental logical pattern of inquiry is thus the same as the basic pattern of every purposeful, directed action: the adaptation of means to the realization of ends-in-view, and the use of ends-in-view as forms or leading principles *informing* and controlling the means. The implications of this principle for social science are revolutionary in view of the prevailing idea "that social inquiry is scientific only when complete renunciation of any reference to *practical* affairs is made its precondition." For it means that "social inquiry, as *inquiry,* involves the necessity of operations which existentially modify actual conditions that, as they exist, are the occasions of genuine inquiry and that provide its subject matter."

No treatise on logic ever written has had as direct and vital an impact on social life as Dewey's will have once its full meaning is widely grasped. This review can give no more than a meager account of its depth and scope, which ranges over a wide field from formal logic and mathematics to the methodology of the social sciences. Nor would it be appropriate to raise here technical issues such as Dewey's attitude to the doctrines of logical empiricism, to which—it seems to the present reviewer—he is more opposed than is demanded by the basic doctrines of his own logical theory. With such trivial reservations one can say that Dewey's "Logic" is a great philosophical work. Had he written nothing else it would have been sufficient to earn for him an illustrious place in the history of philosophy.

WILLIAM GRUEN

America's Future

THE PROSPECTS OF AMERICAN DEMOCRACY. By George S. Counts. John Day Company. $3.

PROFESSOR COUNTS has written a really illuminating book. He has not been afraid to face the grim fact that American democracy is at a turning-point in its history. All the warnings uttered by the great makers of the Jeffersonian tradition threaten the prospect of its survival. A concentrated economic power jeopardizes the authority of the people. A judiciary acts as the tool of that economic power. In its hands is, in major degree, the control of the press, the radio and the educational system. Civil liberties are in jeopardy, because they threaten that power, in a degree that becomes the more serious the more fully it is known. There is widespread, as in California and Harlan County and Jersey City, that temper of violence and intolerance which, in Germany and Italy and Spain, has been the forerunner of fascist upheaval. It is not the least merit of Professor Counts's book that he is not afraid to set out, clearly and soberly, the grave liabilities of the present time. An American citizen who read this book would learn from it how real the danger to his democracy is, and how deep lie the roots of that danger in both the temper and the institutions of the national life.

Professor Counts, however, emphasizes the assets which may be brought into the other side of the account. There is no such semi-feudal stratification of the people as that which still characterizes a good deal of the Western world. There is an inheritance of the democratic outlook which pervades wide masses of the people, America, too, is an experimental civilization; and the rapidity with which it is prepared to accept significant changes quickly is remarkable. Important, too, he thinks are the vast resources of the country, the security of the nation from external attack, the high political sense of the masses. He is impressed by the inability of the "aristocracy" to mobilize its power for attack. He believes, further, that the growing mass of scientific knowledge about man and his place in society puts resources not previously available at the disposal of the democratic leader. And like every good American, Professor Counts has great faith in the potentialities of the educational system, if the teachers will use the obligation and opportunity that are in their hands. He thinks, too, that the spectacle of a Europe growingly enchained by war and fascism will make Americans hesitate long before they surrender their tradition of freedom. Given will and courage and organization, Professor Counts therefore believes that there is a good prospect that American democracy will triumph over its difficulties.

Professor Counts writes with an impressiveness the more persuasive because he is well aware of the strength of the case he has to meet. Yet I cannot help feeling that, even with all his doubts, he emerges from his survey more optimistic than an outsider is inclined to be. He pays relatively little attention to the problem of time. Can the assets of

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which he speaks be mobilized for democratic reorganization as quickly as the crisis requires? The elections of 1932 and 1936 showed clearly that the common man is aware of the urgency he confronts. But his urgency is, so to say, interstitial in both time and space. The divisions in the ranks of labor are a grave handicap. The hesitation of many progressives provides the reactionaries with a façade behind which, as the fight in the Court and Reorganization bills made manifest, they are able with great effectiveness to operate to democratic disadvantage. The kind of attack upon economic royalism to which the Administration pins its faith, the assault on monopoly, for example, seems to me both technically unwise and economically unprofitable. The strategies of delay which the American system leaves at the disposal of the corporate power make the remedies attempted half-adequate at every turn. The maintenance of the separation of powers, federal and geographical, at a time when America confronts the exigencies of the positive state gravely handicaps the ability of a reforming President to move forward rapidly on a wide front. The abyss which separates public opinion from the opinion of the rank-and-file politicians in America remains startling; and the degree to which the latter remain the corrupt henchmen of big business comes out startlingly also every time a major investigation is attempted. I think it may prove decisive in American politics (Professor Counts does not discuss the point) that there is no great political party in America through which organized labor can express its views effectively. I think it important also that there are few great areas of American industry in which the forces of law and order do not act with a decisive bias in favor of the elements hostile to democracy. The revelations of the La Follette Committee on Civil Liberties go deep into the foundation of the American system. There was never a time in the history of the United States when a genuine democracy more gravely threatened sinister interests than it does today. Psychologically, also, there was never a time when, both openly and secretly, those interests were more alert to the consequences of a democratic way of life. They are far more integrated and determined than their opponents. Their power to maneuver is far more rapid and decisive. They live by the inertia of the progressive elements, who lack unity of ideas, unity of strategy, unity of determination. That has been evident in every major crisis in the Roosevelt Administration. The indecision of the President's friends has only too often left the field to his enemies.

I agree with Professor Counts that American democracy has an opportunity of salvation greater than that of any other capitalist country. My doubt is whether it can develop in time, first, the institutions appropriate to its salvation and, second, the unity of mind necessary to make those institutions work in a vital way. I suspect that the federal experiment, in its historic form, is now obsolete; and the difficulty, as a matter of political psychology, to secure its readjustment in time to utilize the assets of which Professor Counts speaks seems to me almost overwhelming. If, in addition to all this, the United States should be drawn into a major war, the prospect of maintaining a democratic society would, I believe, be small indeed. And warmly as I agree with Professor Counts about the pivotal task which the American teacher can perform, I doubt whether he can perform it until, in common with his fellows, he has determined upon the values he is willing to defend. Once he comes to that determination (he has not yet done so), he has to organize to make possible his defense and, not less important, find the allies which will give his organization effective striking power. I cannot speak of American schools, since I know little of them; but in this context the teacher in the American university is mainly inclined to dwell in an ivory tower remote from the battle which rages around him. He is afraid to speak lest he be silenced, and with noble exceptions he is little inclined to realize that men who are afraid to speak soon lose the habit of effective utterance. That is not the least of the reasons for warmly welcoming Professor Counts's book. It is an exhilarating experience to see so incisive an utterance come from a leading figure in a great university.

HAROLD J. LASKI

A Pedlar of Ideas

THE JOURNALS OF BRONSON ALCOTT. Edited by Odell Shepard. Little, Brown and Company. $5.

TO ODELL SHEPARD has fallen the opportunity of restoring an original genius to the world which he ardently desired to serve and which so persistently rejected him. For fifty years Bronson Alcott was something of a figure of fun in Boston; his opinions regarded at first as dangerous and later as precious nonsense, his reputation that of a parasite on the fame of greater men and "Little Women." He left as his monument fifty volumes of journals in manuscript, covering the years between 1826 and 1882, containing on Mr. Shepard's estimate some 5,000,000 words. From this mass the editor has winnowed perhaps a thirtieth part, but sufficient to give a well-rounded presentation of a character and an experience which are the very essence of New England in its flowering. Alcott lamented that his preoccupation with the inner life, seeking to represent it to himself, made it difficult to communicate with the popular mind. "But I do not despair," he wrote. "Time will make me intelligible and I shall not wholly misrepresent myself." Whether his trust in time would have been justified without Mr. Shepard's heroic labors is open to question, but at any rate the happy result has been achieved, and a dim star has been raised to higher magnitude in the New England galaxy.

Alcott's thought was sheer transcendentalism. In his urgency for a spiritual interpretation of the universe he stood against Agassiz in asserting the priority of man to nature. "Matter is a revelation of Mind, the flesh of the Spirit, the world of God. . . . Man is older than Nature. The synthesis of his being is broader. Nature is included within it. Matter, both organic and inorganic, are consequent and sequels of his birth. Nature is the Soul's cast-off wardrobe." Hence he held the high duty of man to continue the creative process. "I bestow a benison on Nature whenever I walk forth in hope and joy and breathe forth my Soul into her atmosphere. I give more than I take." Yet like Wordsworth he left intense gratitude to the hill country in which he spent his youth.

Another element in Alcott's transcendentalism was his mystical belief in childhood as a source of illumination. He looked forward to the birth of his third child, "the young

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celestial whom I am soon to know," as a revelation, "an image of the Infinite and Unshadowed One." Like Francisco Ferrer he was by vocation a teacher of children, and while he did not have to face the firing squad, his martyrdom was real. The first entry in Mr. Shepard's volume is the statement: "Those who in modern times attempt in education anything different from the old-established modes are regarded as publick innovators on the peace and order of society." He was driven from his district school at Cheshire, Connecticut. At Bristol, Connecticut, his engagement was not renewed. In Boston the Temple School, which contributed a classic to the literature of education, was closed by public outcry. At a Teachers' Institute under the direction of Horace Mann he was not allowed to share with others his experience, on the ground that his "political opinions were esteemed hostile to the existence of the state." Beyond question the frustration which left him without the ability to support his family arose from his being excluded from the profession to which he properly belonged. Late in life he was elected superintendent of schools at Concord, but this office he was permitted to hold only a few years. Yet childhood continued to be his source of inspiration. "No man contemporary with me," he wrote, "not even Pestalozzi, has spent more time with children."

Alcott made the discovery that before he could serve children he must educate parents, and toward this end he developed the form of expression which he made famous, the conversation. His natural gift was oral. He lamented that he could not write as he talked. It was as a talker that he made his mark on his contemporaries, in intimate converse with Emerson or Thoreau, or in the general exchange of ideas in the numerous circles and clubs in which he was the moving spirit. Alcott's spirit was above all social.

One value of his Journals is the intellectual panorama of the age in which he appears in turn as the Dr. Johnson and the Boswell. In his terse, penetrating comment on his contemporaries he revealed a power as a writer in which he thought himself lacking. Here is Thoreau: "The ruddiest and nimblest genius that has trodden our woods, he comes amidst mist and exhalations, his locks dripping with moisture, in the sonorous rains of an ever-lyric day." Hawthorne he saw "dodging about among the trees on his hilltop as if he feared his neighbor's eyes would catch him as he walked." Holmes he thought of not "as being youthful, but an old man's son rather, and witty by ancestry." Lowell he could not accept as a poet. "In common sense, keen wit, fanciful humor he is hardly surpassed by any of our American scholars, but in high imagination and the dignities of moral sentiment . . . he appears to me to be deficient." Of Charles Sumner he wrote: "I have never discovered any aptitude of ideas or signs of genius in him. . . . His attainments are all of the Harvard cast." Emerson is the name which appears most often in the Journals. "His friendship has been from the first, and still is, a religion and a culture to me, without which I should have been left much alone and unfriended on this planet." Among the glimpses of that golden day and flowering time of our literature none goes nearer the heart than an entry in December, 1851, "Concord. All day with Emerson and Ideas, the rain pouring outside, also."

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

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CHAPEL HILL

Mozart's Music

MOZART: THE MAN AND HIS WORKS. By W. J. Turner. Alfred A. Knopf. $4.

TURNER'S writings on Mozart—an essay in Volume I of "The Heritage of Music" (Oxford), another in "Facing the Music" (London: Bell), and the present book—are among the most treasurable pieces of critical writings we possess, because of what they manage to say about this most extraordinary of all musical artists, whose extraordinary qualities are so difficult to say anything about. At the end of the second movement of the Piano Concerto K. 467 you may find that you have stopped breathing under the cumulative pressure of the expressiveness and terrific force of what you have been hearing; but you cannot say what the expressiveness and force are, and all you have been hearing is a long, calm cantilena. As Turner has observed, one experiences the music of Mozart directly and cannot describe the experience. But Turner's strength as a critic is that he is himself an artist, a poet—one of the persons who understand some things not at all but some things better than anyone else. At times, then, Turner is perverse, silly, or otherwise irritating as only a poet can be; but on the qualities of Mozart that are so difficult to describe he writes with a poet's penetration and precision of statement.

He observes, for example, that in Mozart's music there are passion, violence, demoniac intensity—qualities of excess that one does not expect to find in the work of a composer who is thought of as a classical artist. It is, he contends, because the passion and intensity are crystallized into pure musical form, because the excess is brought under control and does not exceed, and the music appears the simplest, the clearest of all, that Mozart's art is classical and he is in fact the supreme classical artist. And for this reason the music is ambiguous: "When you are a child Mozart speaks to you as a child—no music could be more simple, more childlike—but when you are a man you find to your astonishment that this music which seemed childlike is completely adult and masculine." And even when you are a man, he might have added, you may still hear only a pleasant melody in the second movement of K. 467, and not hear anything that should cause anyone to stop breathing. Turner develops his idea when he compares Mozart's music to Swift's "Gulliver's Travels":

> It is perfect for children, the most delightful of fairy tales, but when one has grown up (which everybody does not do) one discovers that . . . the simple fairy tale has become profound, terrifying, and mysterious; so mysterious and so uniquely mysterious that to much of Mozart's music one can put no label; one cannot even say whether it is gay or sad, comic or tragic. It is this baffling remoteness from human partisanship and from moral or emotional propaganda . . . allied with an extraordinary intensity which makes Mozart strangely moving and inexplicable.

Writing about the man, Turner is concerned with creating for us the composer of the second movement of K. 467—the composer, that is, not of a pleasant melody but of music with terrific impact—not a delicate "child of the dying rococo age," as he is usually thought of, but "a wholly superior man, intensely serious, deeply compassionate, almost all-comprehending," with the great force of his superiority, his pride

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and honor, as disturbing to lesser men as this force always is; a man, also, with an abundance of sweetness, candor, lightheartedness, and vivacity, and in all these the vital energy which Turner finds unique (there is, he points out, a bigger volume of noise in the last movement of Beethoven's Seventh, but not as quick, as tense a "rush" as in the Overture to "Figaro": "It is the rumble of thunder compared with the flash of lightning"). Turner's method of creating this man for us is in large measure to let him create himself through portions of his letters—an excellent method for Mozart, and most successful in the two or three instances where the letters are not translations but the originals. As breath-taking as the rush of sound in the Overture to "Figaro" is the rush of exuberantly, absurdly, but always pointedly mingled German and Italian with which he describes to his sister a performance of opera in Verona. Thus:

> Ruggiero, un ricco principe, innamorata di Bradamante . . . à una bellisima voce ed è gia vecchio ha cinquante cinque anni ed à una leuffige gurgel. Leone, soll die Bradamente heyrathen, reichissima est; ob er aber asser dem Theatro reich ist, das weis ich nicht, fà una donna, la moglie di Afferi . . . à una bellissima voce, ma è tanto sussuro nell theatro che non si sente niente. Irene fà una sorella di Lolli dell gran Violinisto, che abbiamo sentito à Vienna. à una schnosselte voce, e canta sempre um ein viertil zu tardi, ò troppo a buon ora.

He was fourteen when he wrote this; and at the same time he wrote, among other things, the recitative and aria "Misero me et Misero pargoletto" K. 77, which Wyzewa and Saint-Foix characterize as a work "on the greatest scale that he has produced in this style and one of those in which the precocity of his genius appears most astonishing." But on that subject one could go on forever. B. H. HAGGIN

DRAMA

A New Star

THE story retold in "Oscar Wilde" (Fulton Theater) is the familiar story of one of the stalest of scandals. It is therefore all the more remarkable that the production as a whole should turn out to be very much the most interesting which the new season has to offer. Some credit is due to a very workman-like script, based largely upon documents and the standard biographies, which tells the tale with effective simplicity; but chief credit for the success of the piece must go to the extraordinary impersonation supplied by Robert Morley in the title role.

Mr. Morley is an English actor appearing here in the current motion picture "Marie Antoinette" but otherwise unknown to America, and it is impossible to judge from his performance in a single role what his range may be. There can, however, be few to deny that the portrait of Wilde constitutes one of the most effective bits of acting seen here in years. The mere fact that his resemblance to the published portraits is so startling as to make the spectator rub his eyes may, of course, be due in part to a happy accident, but no

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THE ENDS AND MEANS OF LABOR ACTION by Jay Lovestone

IS THE CATHOLIC CHURCH ANTI-SEMITIC? by Leo Lehman

DOES DEMOCRACY IMPLY SOCIALISM?
Two educational philosophers (Professors John L. Childs of Teachers College and Boyd Bode of Ohio State University) debate Democracy in Education

BUILDING THE FUTURE COMMUNITY
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accident, however happy, could possibly account for the fact that every gesture and intonation seem completely convincing and absolutely right. He speaks Wilde's well-known epigrams with the air of a man who is uttering them for the first time in public—neither too slowly nor more glibly than they would have been spoken by a man well aware that what he said was memorable. He moves just deliberately enough to suggest a poseur who knew precisely how long his admirers would wait without impatience for their hero to strike his attitude. But most remarkable of all is an extraordinarily mobile face, heavy, as Wilde's undoubtedly was, and yet capable of revealing both the complacent triumph of his great days and the misery of his later degradation. Perhaps, however, there is no better way to suggest how good the performance as a whole is than to say that it manages to make understandable the charm to which so many who knew Wilde have testified but which must be taken on faith by those who know only what others have said about him. Mr. Morley glosses nothing over. The figure he presents is gross and obviously androgyne, but it is also the image of a man almost pathetically gracious behind the arrogant mask and one which makes comprehensible as no written accounts do the appeal which Wilde must undoubtedly have had. There are, incidentally, several other excellent performances, notably those by John Buckmaster, who plays Lord Alfred Douglas, and by Harold Young, whose Frank Harris is startlingly like the slightly seedy adventurer once a familiar figure about New York.

In "The Fabulous Invalid" (Broadhurst Theater) the sick man under consideration is the ailing theater itself, and the purpose of the authors, George Kaufman and Moss Hart, is to show how that invalid has managed to survive all the obviously fatal diseases from which at various times he has been known to suffer. The spectacle provided is not a play but a pageant, and as such it is often colorful and effective. It is also, however, so fearfully elaborate that it is frequently downright clumsy, and it continually threatens to crush the struggling authors under the weight of its own machinery.

The first scene shows the opening of the new Alexandria Theater on the first of its first nights; the last, appropriately enough, the moment at the present day when the stage of the now moldy old playhouse is happily reclaimed by an ardent group of young actors who may just possibly belong to the WPA. Some sort of continuity is supplied by the wandering ghosts of two actors privileged to haunt the scene of their former triumph, and all this might be well enough if the authors had been able to devise some consistent device to serve as the skeleton of their pageant. Most of the first act is taken up with brief moments from plays and musical comedies from the day of "The Lion and the Mouse" to that of "What Price Glory," but the scenes are too brief to be very effective and the interruptions to discuss what was said to be wrong with the theater at this moment or that are conspicuously awkward. Then in the second of the two acts the method changes, and we see what went on in this particular theater in the days when first the moving picture and later the burlesque show had taken possession of it. Considered simply by themselves these scenes are not only the best of the evening but also extremely effective as satire. But three or four skits, do not make an evening, and most of the dialogue

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which carries the story forward suggests the halting inanity of a musical-comedy libretto. Probably the authors, with so much material and so much scenery on their hands, despaired of getting a word in edgewise and finally, losing interest in the whole business, decided that anything would do.

Perhaps one thing more is wrong with the theater. Perhaps it is now dying of the search for novelty, of the tendency to rely on "a swell idea for a play" which always turns out to be a stunt of some sort. Perhaps what we really need are playwrights who do not insist upon either an entire absence of scenery or more scenery than anyone else ever had before—playwrights who, on the one hand, aspire to more than a dramatization of the daily paper and, on the other, can get along without either ghosts or personifications of death hiding in apple trees. In any event it is odd that a play intended to suggest that the theater which never dies is only two boards and a passion should be a play in which the dialogue seems no more than a careless afterthought.

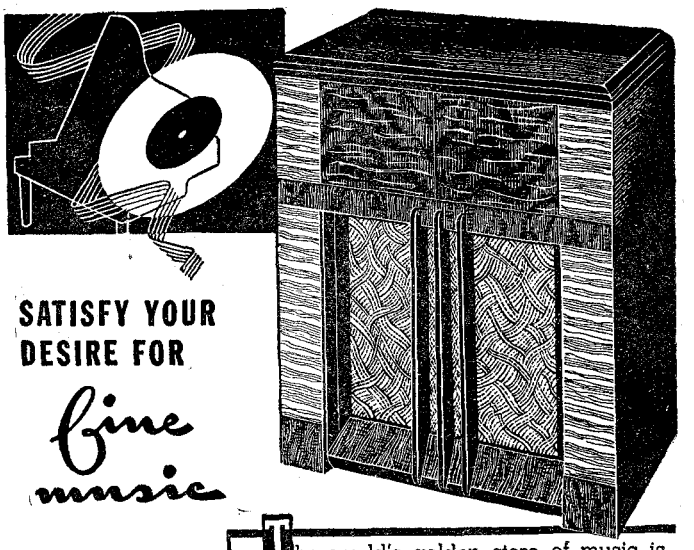
JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

FILMS

"Grand Illusion"

IT IS unkind of Erich von Stroheim to debunk war's illusions in this graceless year. Only two decades ago it was this same Stroheim, "the man you love to hate," who sketched for us the aspect of the hideous Hun in Hollywood's anti-German films. Now he returns in what is outwardly his familiar character—the same white gloves, polished boots, and dextrous cigarette, the same steely stride, and that extraordinary face, glazed and immobile as its ingrown monocle, yet far more eloquent than "acting" ever is. Seeing him thus solidifies old memories, the fine moments in "Blind Husbands" and "Foolish Wives" that made him an image of evil fascination. But though the form of his work is the same, its meaning has changed. In "Grand Illusion" the aristocratic Hun is a pathetic figure from which the menace has gone out. His epicurean elegance is preserved now merely to keep up appearances. Even his strength, his immense vitality, are no longer frightening, because they are atrophying through want of use. It is the same character, yes, but deepened by events, adapted to new conditions. And this development from caricature toward dimension is the measure of von Stroheim's growth since the florid cynicism of his early days. In the man's long struggle against box-officialdom, the actor has been humanized.

Like most of Jean Renoir's films, "Grand Illusion" is an example of what Harry Alan Potamkin used to call "intensive cinema." Sketching quite simply the outlines of life in a German prison camp during the World War, Renoir develops the significant incidents one by one, dwelling upon them until they deepen into a motif, an idea, an opinion. What, asks Renoir, is the experience of a man in modern war? On the battlefield it is obvious enough: kill when you must, escape death when you can. But here in the prison camp, removed from the fact and fear of death, men still try to



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influence an event which is so much larger than their lives. The two who struggle hardest are aristocrats, survivals of a day when individual effort had military value. Von Rauffenstein (click), officer in the imperial Germany army (bow), has been ruined physically in an airplane crash, but he accepts the tedious post of camp commandant in order to continue serving the state. That is the function to which he was bred, without which he does not exist. His French counterpart, Captain de Boieldieu, dies that two fellow-prisoners may escape. He knows that he shivers his painted lance in vain, that this last gift to France is almost theatrical in its futility. But, *noblesse oblige!* For a gentleman, even death must be a gesture to the world passed away. The men for whom he dies have no such sense of personal obligation. Marechal the mechanic and Rosenthal the Jew are democrats. To them war is no profession but a duty, as meaningless as it is unpleasant. Why escape, then? Why not make captivity a refuge until the thing is over and life's familiar outlines reappear? But prison camps are made to escape from; one must do something to feel one's weight in affairs, to seem to affect the issue. So Marechal and Rosenthal start their miserable journey, hardly knowing why they go on. Is it good luck, or bad, or merely another experience, that they fall in with a lonely German woman, widowed by the war, who welcomes them because she wants to hear a man's tread on the floor again? This is their haven, and in it Marechal finds all a man needs, but even here they are still prisoners of circumstance. There is danger in finding peace in the midst of war, danger even in loving a girl who speaks another language. So they go back to France, to help push the war through or to wait for it to wear itself out. After it is over, will Marechal come back to the happiness he has found? But yes, naturally. If he is alive.

The picture, especially this last sequence, is played in muted undertones. Even von Stroheim's powerful presence is subdued to the quiet level of French acting, and Pierre Fresnay, Jean Gabin, and Dita Parlo are people so easy to know that one thinks of them as contemporaries. For though the picture is a period study, its minor and major illusions still prevail in the divided world of 1938. In the fascist countries men turn back to the Rauffenstein ideal, asserting themselves by becoming a unit in the state, making its corporate quarrels their own. To the democracies war is repugnant, but in recent weeks they have seemed to think that in the end it is a necessity. Their illusion, grand only because it is shared by so many people, is that good intentions produce good results. They have forgotten Versailles; they have forgotten that war is now a human enterprise beyond the scope of single human beings. Though it may force them into action, their efforts for good or ill have no weight in its vast, incalculable total. "Grand Illusion" reminds us that this is so, but that is all it does. Renoir, who invokes so skilfully these terrifying images of disintegration, offers in contrast only the old ideal of man's brotherhood, and his film does not tell us whether it is illusion or reality. Marechal and Rosenthal, plebeians that they are, feel kinship with their captors. But their affectionate gestures across the barriers of class and race come too late. Peace is the time for mutual understanding. Once the war mills start grinding, they do not stop until there is nothing left to feed them.

RICHARD GRIFFITH

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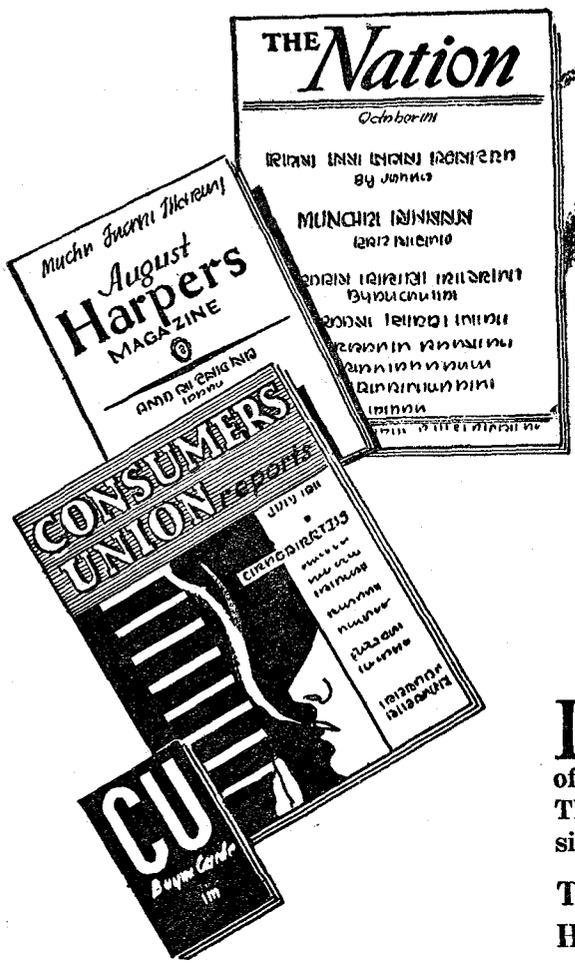

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Letters to the Editors

Colorado Old-Age Pensions

Dear Sirs: I am writing to commend the article on the Townsend racket by Richard L. Neuberger of Oregon, printed in the September 17 issue of *The Nation.*

Colorado was a pioneer in old-age pension laws, enacting the first one in 1927. After some ten years of experiment the Legislature in 1936 passed an admirable and workable old-age-pensions statute which paid $30 a month to some 27,000 pensioners, or about 40 per cent of those above sixty-five years of age, based upon need. The money was raised by liquor taxes and a 2 per cent sales tax, half of each being taken, together with the matching amount of the federal Social Security Board. After this law had been in effect a few months, it was superseded by an initiated constitutional amendment which was adopted by popular vote in November 1936. This amendment attempts to pay $45 a month to all of sixty or above, not on a basis of need but merely of having reached the proper age and not receiving an income exceeding $45 a month.

The group supporting that amendment has never supported any genuine program of social security. That is shown by the fact that the taxes set by the amendment do not raise anywhere near enough money to pay the $45 a month. Moreover, another statutory provision in the same amendment impounded 85 per cent of all excise taxes now in effect or to be enacted in the future for old-age pensions exclusively, leaving only 15 per cent for all other relief. That effectively cut off funds which had been devoted to other relief purposes and denied to the state government any right or possibility of raising sufficient funds to take care of any other class of destitute people.

Now another constitutional amendment, also initiated, is on the ballot in Colorado to be voted upon in 1938. If adopted, it will get rid of the 85 per cent trap and place in the hands of the Legislature again the power to establish the terms of old-age pension statutes and the means of raising the money, as well as the power to provide funds for other relief cases.

RUDOLPH JOHNSON

Boulder, Colorado, October 5

"Village Atheist" in Context

Dear Sirs: I found myself in complete agreement with Charles Beard's masterful dissection of Allan Nevins's book in *The Nation* of September 24. Thus I feel it all the more important to clarify a reference Mr. Beard made to me. Speaking of the reception accorded to his theory of the economic interpretation of the Constitution, Mr. Beard said, "An editor of *The Nation* has set me down as 'a village atheist.'" The editor referred to is myself. The phrase occurred in an article in *The Nation* of April 8, 1936, Charles Beard Confronts Himself, reviewing a new edition of Beard's classic on the Constitution. But Mr. Beard should, as a good historian, have regard for the context. In his article on Nevins he is talking of the orthodox who were shocked by his historical theory because it forced them to face the fact that there are dominant economic drives in history. To list me among them is something less than accurate. My own criticism of Beard was that in his new introduction, written almost a quarter-century later, he had abandoned a good deal of the ground he had once staked out for the economic interpretation of history; in fact, that his real position was to give a vague emphasis to the economic factors rather than to make them part of a reasoned theory of the dynamic of history. It was in this context that I wrote:

> He has a horror of the history writing that was drenched with spiritual unction. In fact, I suspect that much of the reason why Mr. Beard and many of his generation were once attracted by the economic emphasis in history was that it gave them a sweet and secret iconoclastic sense. Like the village atheist, they get a kick out of destroying the theological and pseudo-spiritual myths.

It should have been clear from my article that I was criticizing Mr. Beard for not going far enough with his economic interpretation rather than for going too far. I am certain that if he had had more space, he would have distinguished me from the filio-pietistic critics who regard him as irreverent, or the scholars who hold that any consistently applied theory of history violates a putative and impossible scientific "detachment."

MAX LERNER

Williamstown, Mass., October 4

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